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ABSTRACT

The committee that produced this report was asked to review existing New York State social studies syllabi and to make recommendations to the Commissioner of Education designed to increase students' understanding of U.S. culture and its history; the cultures, identities, and histories of the diverse groups that comprise U.S. society today; and the cultures, identities, and histories of other people throughout the world. A review of the existing syllabi respecting these concerns found them to be inadequate. The syllabi were found to contain insensitive language, to draw upon too narrow a range of culturally diverse contexts, and to omit content, felt to be essential, specific to some groups and areas of the world. Among the committee's overall recommendations were that the present New York State social studies syllabi be subjected to detailed analysis and revision to provide more opportunities for students to learn from multiple perspectives and to remove language that is insensitive or that may be interpreted as racist or sexist. The committee also made recommendations concerning the specific areas of teaching and learning, the State Syllabi, and guidelines for implementation. The report concludes with reflective commentaries by several members of the committee in which some dissents are registered and in which others expand upon positions that are held by specific committee members. (Author/DB)

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One Nation, Many Peoples:

A Declaration of Cultural Interdependence

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The Report of the New York State Social Studies Review and Development Committee

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One Nation, Many Peoples:

A Declaration of Cultural Interdependence

The Report of the New York State Social Studies Review and Development Committee

June 1991

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Letter of Transmittal

Thomas Sobol
Commissioner of Education and
President of The University of the State of New York
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Dr. Sobol:

As Cochairpersons of the Social Studies Review and Development Committee, it is our pleasure to submit the initial report of the Committee.

Your charge to the Committee was seen as setting forth a two-stage assignment. In the first stage, reported herein, the Committee was instructed to develop criteria for review of the social studies curriculum, examine curriculum models showing special promise, and assess existing syllabi for effectiveness and recommend changes in content, form, or emphasis. This initial report carries out those assignments and establishes an intellectual framework, criteria, and guidelines for implementation.

The second stage of the assignment, as outlined in the charge, is as follows:

"To assist the State Education Department in overseeing the development of changes in the syllabi" and

"To assist the State Education Department in overseeing the development of relevant instructional materials, field testing of syllabi and materials, and associated staff development work."

In our report we outline in some detail the work that now must be done to complete the development of new syllabi and to put these into place across the state. Although many of the remaining tasks are matters which must be carried out by others at the school level, district level, and state level, and by universities and professional groups, this committee stands ready to assist and to advise in the work ahead.

Our work to date has been extremely demanding as an intellectual task and also deeply gratifying in human terms. We hope the work of this first phase will contribute to the improvement of social studies teaching in New York State and indirectly in the nation as a whole.

Respectfully,

Edmund Gordon and Francis Roberts
Cochairpersons of the Committee

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The Committee also wishes to express special appreciation to Celia Diamond, Edward Lalor and all of the other members of the staff of the State Education Department and Mary Solano of the Cold Spring Harbor School District who provided so much assistance, and to Aundra Saa Meroe and Cybele Raver of Yale for their invaluable assistance and analysis.

* Members appointed to the committee who were unable to attend meetings.

** Members who had to withdraw from membership.

❍ Consultant to the Committee.

Social Studies Review and Development Committee Charge

The Social Studies Review and Development Committee is asked to review existing State social studies syllabi and to make recommendations to the Commissioner designed to increase students' understanding of American culture and its history; the cultures, identities, and histories of the diverse groups which comprise American society today; and the cultures, identities, and histories of other peoples throughout the world.

In pursuing this charge, the Committee is asked to:

- Develop, for the guidance of the Committee's work, such criteria as may be necessary to determine or judge the integrity and fidelity of the canon upon which the social studies curricula must be based.
- Examine emerging and extant curricular models (both empirical and theoretical) which show promise of informing curriculum practice and development relevant to the charge to this Committee.
- Assess existing syllabi for their pedagogical effectiveness and recommend appropriate changes to improve it.
- Recommend appropriate changes of content, form, and/or emphasis.
- Assist the State Education Department in overseeing the development of changes in the syllabi.
- Assist the State Education Department in overseeing the development of relevant instructional materials, field testing of syllabi and materials, and associated staff development work.
- Make such other recommendations as may foster the purposes contained in the charge.

The Committee's recommendations to the Commissioner will be made public and will be given great weight. However, final authority for making policy decisions on these matters remains with the New York State Board of Regents.

Executive Summary

The Committee was asked to review existing New York State social studies syllabi and to make recommendations to the Commissioner of Education designed to increase students' understanding of American culture and its history; the cultures, identities, and histories of the diverse groups which comprise American society today; and the cultures, identities, and histories of other people throughout the world.

In responding to this charge, the Committee members were mindful of four interrelated concerns.

1. Despite growing attention to the need for preparing young people to participate in the world community, the United States continues to be deeply involved in nation-building. The common school is generally viewed as one of the principal vehicles for building in our young people the attitudes, knowledge, skills and understandings essential to continuing national cohesion and viability. The teaching of the nation's history, our national traditions and values, and a common loyalty are purposes commonly accepted as appropriate to the social studies.
2. The present is unlike earlier periods in the history of this country, for now the various peoples who make up our nation, while anxiously embracing many of the advantages, opportunities and mores of this society, seem determined also to maintain and publicly to celebrate much that is peculiar to the cultures with which they identify. Recognizing the interdependence of cultures in this multicultural nation, yet unwilling to give up or celebrate in private that with which they have previously been identified, they insist that their participation be recognized, and that their knowledge and perspectives be treated with parity.
3. It is especially in the teaching and learning of geography and history in the social studies that the nation has expected its schools to prepare students for citizenship. Yet it is also in the teaching and learning of this subject matter that the schools are expected to address the facts of diverse cultures, histories and world views. In a period of heightened consciousness about cultural identity, the problems of teaching and learning this subject matter are made more difficult by lack of attention to this diversity and of reference to a variety of cultures.
4. Not only the world, but also our nation and the peoples who inhabit it, are changing. The nature of our knowledge and the criteria for being judged an educated person are changing, as are our conceptions of effective teaching and learning. Especially in the humanities and the social sciences, we are beginning to realize that understanding and the ability to appreciate things from more than one perspective may be as important as is factual knowledge, among the goals of education. One result of this changing perception is the Committee's assertion that the social studies should be concerned, not so much with "whose culture"

and "whose history" are to be taught and learned, as with the development of intellectual competence in learners, with intellectual competence viewed as having as one of its major components the capacity to view the world and understand it from multiple perspectives. Thus the report takes the position that a few fundamental concepts should be the focus of teaching and learning in the social studies, with applications, contexts and examples drawn from multiple cultural sources, differing perspectives and diverse groups. Multicultural knowledge in this conception of the social studies becomes a vehicle and not the goal. Multicultural content and experience become instruments by which we enable students to develop their intelligence and to function as human and humane persons.

The Committee reviewed the existing syllabi and found them inadequate with reference to these concerns. By most acceptable standards of fairness and equitable treatment of the many cultural currents in our nation, the existing syllabi were found wanting, even though in may ways they are among the most advanced in the nation. They were found to contain insensitive language, to draw upon too narrow a range of culturally diverse contexts, and to omit content specific to some groups and areas of the world that some members of the Committee feel to be essential. Although the existing syllabi permit a high degree of freedom in the choice of materials, they can be criticized on the one hand for being insufficiently directive to insure certain types of coverage, and on the other hand for prescribing too heavy a load of specific content.

Thus the Committee recommends:

1. That the present New York State social studies syllabi be subjected to detailed analysis and revision to provide more opportunities for students to learn from multiple perspectives and to remove language which is insensitive or which may be interpreted as racist or sexist.
2. That appropriate mechanisms be set in place to produce a more long-term revision of the syllabi, in order better to reflect the variety of cultural and social divisions extant in the nation's peoples; to be sensitive to the changing nature of our knowledge and of the criteria by which educated persons are judged; and to make the tasks of teaching and learning the social studies manageable, as well as responsive to varied (and sometimes competing) interests.
3. That seven concepts guide social studies curriculum reform:
   a. Democracy: Democratic ideals as the foundation of American society.
   b. Diversity: Understanding and respecting others and oneself.
   c. Economic and Social Justice: Understanding personal and social responsibility for economic and social systems, and for their effects.
   d. Globalism: Recognizing interdependence and world citizenship.
   e. Ecological Balance: Recognizing responsibility for the global neighborhood.
   f. Ethics and Values: The pursuit of fairness and the search for responsibility.
   g. The Individual and Society: Seeing oneself as a participant in society.

   In order for these concepts to be realized in the social studies as experienced by students, teachers and others in the learning community, several changes will be required in the content, conditions and practice of teaching and learning in the social studies.
4. That the following principles for teaching and learning, therefore, guide the implementation of these changes:
   a. The selection of subject matter content should be *culturally inclusive*, based on up-to-date scholarship in history, the social sciences, and related fields.
   b. The subject matter content selected for inclusion should represent *diversity and unity* within and across groups.

c. The subject matter content selected for inclusion should be set within the *context of its time and place.*

d. The subject matter selected for inclusion should give *priority to depth over breadth.*

e. Multicultural perspectives should *infuse the entire curriculum, prekindergarten through grade 12.*

f. The subject matter content should be *treated as socially constructed* and therefore tentative — as is all knowledge.

g. The teaching of social studies should *draw and build on the experience and knowledge that students bring to the classroom.*

h. Pedagogy should incorporate a *range of interactive modes of teaching and learning* in order to foster understanding (rather than rote learning), examination of controversy, and mutual learning.

5. That the following considerations govern revisions in the State syllabi:

a. The fundamental approach to the teaching of social studies must change from the traditional emphasis on teaching large amounts of information, later to be tested, to a more focused, conceptual basis emphasizing the development of fundamental tools, concepts, and intellectual processes by which students may approach knowledge in a variety of ways and evaluate contradictions in history and the social studies.

b. For the improvements in the syllabi to have meaning, the preservice and in-service education of teachers must change. Colleges of education and liberal arts must learn to cooperate in the education of teachers; certification requirements must change; and more attention must be given to programs that broaden the perspectives of teachers so that they may teach about other cultures and peoples.

c. For the syllabi to be most useful in the process of school improvement, the State Education Department must become an agency to encourage, support, and lead the schools to carry out their decentralized work in imaginative, reflective, and carefully evaluated ways. The old top-down approach is no longer appropriate.

d. The following Findings must be addressed in revising syllabi and developing new materials:

- *Finding: Need for Multiple Perspectives.*
  - *Related Finding: Unequal regard for the importance of national/regional boundaries and distinctions.*
  - *Related Finding: A disregard for the understanding and study of indigenous social, political, economic, and technological structures, and the precolonial histories of indigenous peoples.*
  - *Related Finding: Effects are often seen as unidirectional (with the European participants as the actors) rather than bi-directional.*
  - *Related Finding: Complex and large-scale issues are often simplified because they are seen from a single, implicit perspective.*
- *Finding: Language Sensitivity.*
- *Finding: A limited range of examples.*
- *Finding: The visual environment of the classroom and school is a major educational element.*
- *Finding: Social studies teaching becomes more powerful to the extent that it is linked to other parts of the curriculum.*
- *Finding: Too great an emphasis on educationally inappropriate assessment.*
- *Finding: The K-12 program has, and should continue to use, a comprehensive developmental approach to the social studies.*

6. Guidelines for Implementation: That, in order for the teaching of history and the social sciences to play a central role in strengthening multicultural and global education, the following steps be taken:
   a. Institutional commitment and appropriate policies must be established at all levels of educational governance, from the Board of Regents to the local school.
   b. Appropriate curriculum content, organization, and structure must be established. These tasks are not simply a matter of revising a State syllabus, but must involve a reconceptualization of the teaching of the social studies.
   c. Appropriate and relevant assessment procedures, standards, and control points must be established. A major part of this involves re-thinking the type and extent of State testing and re-thinking, as well, testing practices at the local level.
   d. Adequate human and other resources and support systems must be provided at all levels.
   e. Preservice and in-service teacher education must be revised and improved in order to prepare teachers to teach multicultural and global education better, and more fundamentally, to teach history and the social sciences from a more conceptual basis, informed by the best current scholarship.
   f. Finally, as the economic climate improves, the funds must be provided to carry out the program recommended and to provide the necessary material and human resources.

The report of the Committee concludes with reflective commentaries by several members of the Committee, in which some register dissents and others expand upon positions which they individually hold. These reflections are to be read as a part of the report, since they reflect, better than any attempt at description, the complexities of the process and subject of the Committee's work.

Preamble

The United States is a microcosm of humanity today. No other country in the world is peopled by a greater variety of races, nationalities, and ethnic groups. But although the United States has been a great asylum for diverse peoples, it has not always been a great refuge for diverse cultures. The country has opened its doors to a multitude of nationalities, but often their cultures have not been encouraged to survive or, at best, have been kept marginal to the mainstream.

Since the 1960s, however, a profound reorientation of the self-image of Americans has been under way. Before this time the dominant model of the typical American had been conditioned primarily by the need to shape a unified nation out of a variety of contrasting and often conflicting European immigrant communities. But following the struggles for civil rights, the unprecedented increase in non-European immigration over the last two decades and the increasing recognition of our nation's indigenous heritage, there has been a fundamental change in the image of what a resident of the United States is.

With this change, which necessarily highlights the racial and ethnic pluralism of the nation, previous ideals of assimilation to an Anglo-American model have been put in question and are now slowly and sometimes painfully being set aside. Many people in the United States today are no longer comfortable with the requirement, common in the past, that they shed their specific cultural differences in order to be considered American. Instead, while busily adapting to and shaping mainstream cultural ideals commonly identified as American, in recent decades many in the United States — from European and non-European backgrounds — have been encouraging a more tolerant, inclusive, and realistic vision of American identity than any that has existed in the past.

This identity, committed to the democratic principles of the nation and the nation-building in which all Americans are engaged, is progressively evolving from the past model toward a new model marked by respect for pluralism and awareness of the virtues of diversity. This situation is a current reality, and a multicultural education, anchored to the shared principles of a liberal democracy, is today less an educational innovation than a national priority.

It is fitting for New York State, host to the Statue of Liberty, to inaugurate a curriculum that reflects the rich cultural diversity of the nation. The beacon of hope welcomes not just the "wretched and poor" individuals of the world, but also the dynamic and rich cultures all people bring with them.

Two centuries after this country's founders issued a Declaration of Independence, focused on the political independence from which societies distant from the United States have continued to draw inspiration, the time has come to *recognize cultural interdependence*. We propose that the principle of respect for diverse cultures is critical to our

nation, and we affirm that a right to cultural diversity exists. We believe that the schoolroom is one of the places where this cultural *interdependence* must be reflected.

It is in this spirit that we have crafted this report, "One Nation, Many Peoples." We see the social studies as the primary avenue through which the school addresses our cultural diversity and interdependence. But the study of cultural diversity and interdependence is only one goal. It is through such studies that we seek to strengthen our national commitment and world citizenship, with the development of intellectual competence in our students as the foundation. We see the social studies as directed at the development of intellectual competence in learners, with the capacity to view the world and understand it from multiple perspectives as one of the main components of such competence. Multicultural knowledge in this conception of the social studies becomes a vehicle and not a goal. Multicultural content and experience become instruments by which we enable students to develop their intelligence and to function as human and humane persons.

I. Introduction

Affirmation of Purpose

This Committee affirms that multicultural education should be a source of strength and pride. Multicultural education is often viewed as divisive and even as destructive of the values and beliefs which hold us together as Americans. Certainly, contemporary trends toward separation and dissolution in such disparate countries as the Soviet Union, South Africa, Canada, Yugoslavia, Spain, and the United Kingdom remind us that different ethnic and racial groups have often had extraordinary difficulty remaining together in nation-states. But national unity does not require that we eliminate the very diversity that is the source of our uniqueness and, indeed, of our adaptability and viability among the nations of the world. *If the United States is to continue to prosper in the 21st century, then all of its citizens, whatever their race or ethnicity, must believe that they and their ancestors have shared in the building of the country and have a stake in its success.* Thus, multicultural education, far from being a source of dissolution, is necessary for the cultural health, social stability, and economic future of New York State and the nation.

The Committee believes that to achieve these ends, the teaching of social studies should emphasize the following:

First, beginning in the earliest grades social studies should be taught from a global perspective. The earth is humankind's common home. Migration is our common history. The earth's peoples, cultures, and material resources are our common wealth. Both humankind's pain and humankind's triumphs must be shared globally. The uniqueness of humankind is our *many ways of being human,* our remarkable range of cultural and physical diversity within a common biological unity.

Second, the social studies will very likely continue to serve nation-building purposes, among others, even as we encourage global perspectives. With efforts to respect and honor the diverse and pluralistic elements in our nation, special attention will need to be given to those values, characteristics, and traditions which we share in common. Commitment to the presentation of multiple perspectives in the social studies curriculum encourages attention to the traditional and dominant elements in our society, even as we introduce and examine minority elements which have been neglected or those which are emerging as a result of new scholarship and newly recognized voices.

Third, the curriculum must strive to be informed by the most up-to-date scholarship. It must be open to all relevant input, to new knowledge, to fresh perspectives. Human history is to be seen as ongoing, often contradictory, and subject to reasonable differences based on contrasting perceptions and distinct viewpoints.

Fourth, students need to see themselves as active makers and changers of culture and society; they must be helped to develop the tools by which to judge, analyze, act, and evaluate.

Fifth, the program should be committed to the honoring and continuing examination of democratic values as an essential basis for social organization and nation-building. The application of democracy to social organization should be viewed as a continuing process which sometimes succeeds and sometimes fails, and thus requires constant effort.

Sixth, one of the central aims of the social studies is the development of the intellect; thus, the social studies should be taught not solely as information, but rather through the critical examination of ideas and events rooted in time and place and responding to social interests. The social studies should be seen not as some dreary schoolroom task of fact mastery to be tested and forgotten, but as one of the best curricular vehicles for telling the story of humanity in a way that motivates and inspires all of our children to continue the process of responsible nation-building in a world context.

Formation and Work of the Committee

This report is the result of the deliberations of the members of the Social Studies Review and Development Committee, appointed by the New York State Commissioner of Education with the approval of the Board of Regents in July of 1990. The Committee is composed of school teachers from rural, suburban, and urban primary and secondary schools in New York State, school administrators, and university professors. Group members represent a broad spectrum of approaches to the teaching of social studies, the social sciences, and multicultural education, and the Committee, as a group, reflects geographic, disciplinary, ethnic, and gender diversity.

The Committee based its work on the charge by the Commissioner:

> The Social Studies Review and Development Committee is asked to review existing State social studies syllabi and to make recommendations to the Commissioner designed to increase students' understanding of American culture and history; the cultures, identities, and histories of the diverse groups which comprise American society today; and the cultures, identities and histories of other peoples throughout the world.

Accordingly, the Committee considered: 1) the implications of this charge relative to the depth and comprehensiveness of the Committee's work, 2) criteria to be used in reviewing the New York State social studies syllabi, 3) the domain and purpose of the social studies, including such issues as the scope of the social studies and the relevance of social studies to the learner, 4) its own preliminary reviews of the current syllabi for grades K-12, 5) the conceptual and pedagogical foundations for the Committee's findings and recommendations, and 6) the structure, format, and writing of this report. Central to the Committee's cohesion as a group was the development of consensus on a number of critical issues:

1. Calls for immediate revisions of omissions, inaccuracies and misrepresentations within the content of the K-12 syllabus must be balanced by commitment to long-term restructuring of the curriculum and teaching practices of social studies in New York State classrooms. The Committee's findings and recommendations are to be pragmatic in promoting significant and implementable improvements to the present syllabi, but also to provide a comprehensive blueprint for the improvement of social studies teaching and learning for the future.
2. Commitment to bettering the teaching and learning of social studies through the incorporation of multiple perspectives is basic to the needs of students in the 21st Century. *This commitment provides a way to avoid unnecessary debate about controlling the content of the syllabus, i.e., "whose history" should be taught.* The

Committee's deliberations emphasized valuing multiple perspectives, not only as pedagogically sound, but because in Commissioner Sobol's words, "the truth of our history demands it."

3. To most, if not all committee members, it was critically important to view history as interpretations of the past that undergo continual revision and challenge, and to embody this process of debate in the teaching and learning of social studies.
4. The Committee members approached the task of review and recommendation with a dual appreciation for both 1) the theoretical foundation for pedagogical change and 2) issues of implementation. Without the tools and resources for implementation, any recommendations, regardless of their theoretical worth, are likely to be shelved rather than put into practice.
5. In order to insure implementation of its findings, the Committee decided to make comprehensive recommendations, with full consideration of both the syllabi themselves and also the support, resources and changes needed in educational policy, teacher education, classroom materials available to teachers, and assessment measures for students.

These ideas guided the Committee members in producing the findings and recommendations that follow in this report. These findings must be understood in the light of the recent and historical contexts of social studies curriculum revision in New York State.

Background: The Social Studies and the Changing Society

Recent debate concerning change in New York State's social studies curriculum often implies that the curriculum stands as a fixed and unchanging prescription for the classroom, its stability protecting the inculcation of basic values from shifting political and economic winds. Closer examination, however, reveals that the curriculum has grown and been transformed over time in response to societal change, as a few examples will show. (For this discussion, the Committee is indebted to publications of the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Society for the Study of Education, and the Bradley Commission on History in the Schools, and to the staff of the Bureau of Social Studies Education in the State Education Department.)

Unlike literature and languages, the social studies and their parent disciplines of history and geography were not a major part of the mainstream of the school curriculum until the present century. In 1899, a Committee of Seven of the American Historical Association (founded in 1884) made a recommendation which led to the study of European and American history and government in schools, including those of New York State. Other subject-matter organizations, as they were formed, also began to press for inclusion in the school curriculum (the American Political Science Association and the American Sociological Association, for example, founded respectively in 1903 and 1905).

In the second decade of this century, the need to accommodate the surge of immigration led to the view that the schools should help students develop the attitudes and skills necessary for good citizenship. In 1916 a Committee on the Social Studies of the American Historical Association declared this to be the goal of schooling, bringing the term "social studies" into formal use. In 1951, responding to the mood of national insecurity reflected in McCarthyism, New York State dropped the term "social studies" in favor of "citizenship education," and the amount of American history in the secondary curriculum was greatly increased ("social studies" re-emerged in 1960). Between 1965 and the late 1980s, as international communication and commerce increased, the curriculum was enlarged to include more global studies, such as year-long courses in Asian and African Studies (grade 9) and European Studies (grade 10). Since 1987, these in turn have been replaced by a two-year global studies sequence.

Indeed, the processes of contest, debate, and transformation are integral parts of the rich history of education in the United States. That history has reflected the society of which it is a part, and societal changes over the past 30 years have brought with them rising interest in the study of diverse cultures in the United States and the world. In the universities, scholarly attention has turned to previously neglected groups (those that have historically been minorities in the United States and women) and topics (social history, ethnic and cultural studies). Such scholarship has brought to light much that had been omitted from U.S. and world history, as traditionally studied.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, elementary and secondary schools, like colleges and universities, were faced with the recognition that much of the experience, cultural values, and collective pasts of their students was not identified or represented in the curriculum. Corresponding to what James A. Banks has termed the "demographic imperative" of increasing numbers of minority students enrolled in public schools, parents, students and communities served by the schools became more forceful in demanding that their children learn about their own pasts. There was a new recognition that the teaching of social studies as a single officially sanctioned story was inaccurate as to the facts of conflict in American history, and further, that it was limiting for white students and students of color alike.

Much of the heat of debate concerning the importance of valuing cultural difference in the schools arises from divergent opinions on whether preparing students to become members of U.S. society necessarily means assimilation. While the goal of assimilation has historically been relatively explicit in American schooling, in recent years many thoughtful writers and educators have argued against assimilation when interpreted as erasure of distinctive cultural identities. *Education must respond to the joint imperatives of educating toward citizenship in a common polity while respecting and taking account of continuing distinctiveness.* Even more, as we have argued, the perspectives of a number of major groups in American society must be recognized and incorporated. Nor is assimilation essential to educate citizens who value this country's ideals and participate in its polity and economy.

Weaving multiple cultural perspectives into the social studies curriculum is important to the education of all students. By including preparation in multicultural education in its standards, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) correctly recognized in the late 1970s what we appear to need to "discover" again: that multicultural education has powerful pedagogical repercussions critical to both white students and students of color, quite apart from issues of assimilation and loss of identity. NCATE suggested in 1979 that multicultural education provided

> preparation for the social, political and economic realities individuals experience in diverse and complex human encounters. These realities have both national and international dimensions. This preparation provides a process by which an individual develops competencies for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving in different cultural settings. Thus, multicultural education is viewed as an intervention and an ongoing assessment process to help institutions and individuals become more responsive to the human condition, individual cultural integrity, and cultural pluralism in society. (Cited in Charles A. Tesconi, "Multicultural Education: A Valued But Problematic Ideal," *Theory Into Practice*, 23(2), pp. 87-92, 1983)

Over the past two decades, elementary, middle, and secondary schools and postsecondary institutions have seen efforts to restructure the curriculum in order to represent more adequately the diverse cultures of the student body and the world in which students must eventually function. Shifts in curriculum design in such states as California, Oregon, Iowa, Ohio and Florida reflect an increasing awareness that children and society are inadequately served when study is limited to the intellectual monuments of Western civilization. Comprehensive study of multiple cultures is increasingly recognized as

having critical relevance for students who will face a national economy and political structures that grow more globally interdependent and increasingly diverse.

New York State has successfully embarked upon a number of investigations and efforts to revise the curriculum to include the study of multiple perspectives and diverse cultures, both within and outside the U.S. Since 1970 the Board of Regents has issued a series of policy statements seeking to ensure that, in the words of a 1983 report on education for a global perspective, "all students should have a knowledge and understanding of the cultures of this nation and of the world and that more students should possess communication skills necessary to meet their personal, academic and professional objectives" in both their own and other cultures and languages. In keeping with this long-standing policy, and in response to the report, "A Curriculum of Inclusion," by an earlier task force appointed to investigate the extent to which the New York State Social Studies syllabi are responsive to the facts of diversity in this State, the Board of Regents has decided to consider recommendations designed to

> increase students' understanding of American culture and history; the cultures, identities and histories of the diverse groups which comprise American society today; and the cultures, identities and histories of other peoples throughout the world.

This report presents such recommendations and the findings upon which they are based.

II. Conceptual Foundations for Social Studies at Century's End: Education for Growth, Understanding, and Success

The population of New York State has changed dramatically in the last two decades. So has the nation's global context. Always a vibrant and changing mix of cultures, New York in the past decade has participated in what *The New York Times*, reporting on the results of the 1990 U.S. Census, termed a "profound change in [the] racial makeup of the nation":

> The racial complexion of the American population changed more dramatically in the past decade than at any time in the 20th century, with nearly one in every four Americans having African, Asian, Hispanic or American Indian ancestry. In 1980, one in five Americans had such minority backgrounds. . . . In New York, minority residents make up about 31 percent of the population, up from 25 percent in 1980. (March 11, 1991, pp. A1 and B8)

Our growing ethnic and racial diversity is making the search for common cultural grounds seem more important than ever. At the same time, a new world of economic competition and ecological precariousness threatens past gains, present efforts, and future aspirations. The Social Studies Review and Development Committee believes that our very diversity, if properly regarded and treated, is the State's and country's source of strength. A diverse population has a variety of approaches to challenges and opportunities, a variety of talents, a variety of adaptive strategies, a variety of ways to communicate and interact with the world. Mindful of the challenges to our domestic tranquillity and our international position, but hopeful about the future, we propose a framework for revisions to the New York State social studies syllabi that can help address our students' need for personal growth, social understanding, and future career success. Central to our task has been a search for better ways to stimulate intellectual development, increase students' knowledge and skills, and make available to all students an understanding and appreciation of themselves, their relation to society, their cultural heritage and that of their neighbors.

What Are the Social Studies?

Social studies encompass history, the social sciences, and relevant aspects of the humanities. The complementarity of the disciplines should be recognized throughout the course of study, with history and geography providing the continuing frameworks of time and place.

The purposes of the social studies curriculum include developing awareness and knowledge of America as a multicultural society, and of a multicultural world, past and present; engendering civic responsibility within this context; and helping develop the tools necessary for critical thinking, reflective reading, deliberate writing, and social action. Students must learn the significance of our democratic rights and principles, and the importance of playing an active role in preserving and extending them to everyone. Effective social studies instruction includes leading students not only to be responsible for their personal welfare, but also to be concerned for that of their neighbors. In a world where change is constant and inevitable, students must learn to adapt to change and to influence it constructively. Consequently, the ends of the successful education of a democratic, civic-minded student can be described as follows:

> To participate effectively in social change, students must be taught social criticism and must be helped to understand the inconsistency between our ideals and social realities, the work that must be done to close this gap, and how they can, as individuals and groups, become empowered to influence the social and political systems of their societies. (James A. Banks, *Multiethnic Education: Theory and Practice*, Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1989)

As the National Council for the Social Studies put it in the statement, "Essentials of the Social Studies" (1981):

> Citizen participation in public life is essential to the health of our democratic system. Effective social studies programs help prepare young people who can identify, understand and work to solve the problems that face our increasingly diverse nation and interdependent world.

Because of the diversity of American society and in order to prepare students to understand and influence the world of which they are a part, we should strive to teach social studies from a multicultural perspective, regardless of whether the school community is itself diverse or whether the local student population is drawn predominantly from one cultural group. To make this possible, teachers should have maximum flexibility, within the established curriculum, to adjust the emphases selected consistent with the immediate and broader cultural contexts. Social studies should seek to make clear not only the common concerns, achievements and aspirations that are the source of national unity, but also the distinctive historical roles, traditions and contributions of the different peoples who together have struggled to create the United States. A multicultural perspective, then, means that all the applicable viewpoints of the historical and social protagonists should be explored, paying special attention to the ways in which race, ethnicity, gender and class generate different ways of understanding, experiencing, and evaluating the events of the world. Because interpretations vary as experiences differ, a multicultural perspective must necessarily be a multiple perspective that takes into account the variety of ways in which any topic can be comprehended.

The social studies should complement, and be complemented by, work in other academic areas. Social studies should contribute to students' development of cognitive abilities, literacy, and quantitative knowledge and skill. Wherever appropriate, interdisciplinary approaches should be used, for example, relating social studies to the study of language arts, science, mathematics, and the arts. *The goal is the development of the intel-*

lect, including the ability to find, process, and transform information, with the study of multiple cultures and their diverse forms of understanding as the vehicle.

The development of the intellect includes the ability to use evidence to test a thesis, to reason inductively and deductively, to discern similarities and differences, and to make connections among processes, events, possibilities, and results. An understanding of multiple perspectives includes the capacity to distance oneself from one's beliefs in order to encounter and appreciate the beliefs, reasons and practices of others. In order to make this difficult task possible, the curriculum should:

1. Incorporate the most up-to-date, thoroughly researched, and conceptually advanced scholarship, including the work of scholars of both sexes and all racial or ethnic backgrounds.
2. Incorporate opposing opinions, divergent interpretations, and conflicting data to stimulate thought and to show that scholars frequently disagree. As the historian Pieter Geyl has written: "History is an argument without end" (*Napoleon: For and Against*). To treat social studies in this way not only reflects the nature of the subject, as a way of continually discovering the human past and present; it also makes the subject more lively and interesting to teach and to learn.

The students' ability to use controversy, argument and debate as tools of thinking should be developed by organizing learning so that students can engage in them.

Seven Guiding Principles for the Social Studies Curriculum

The Committee believes that the social studies curriculum should be structured around the following distinct, but overlapping, principles.

1. **DEMOCRACY:** Bridging the gap between reality and the ideal.

   Democratic ideals provide the crucial foundation of American society. The social studies curriculum should help students to assess critically the reasons for the inconsistencies between the ideals of the U.S. and social realities. It should also provide information and intellectual tools that can permit them to contribute to bringing reality closer to the ideals. To do this, the social studies curriculum should lead to an examination and understanding of the following propositions:

   a. That democracy is a dynamic and ongoing process.
   b. That the application of the Constitution with its Bill of Rights is the product of a concerted effort by many peoples.
   c. That although liberty is an inalienable right, it is precarious and has many enemies. Therefore, freedom must be constantly fought for and protected.
   d. That the real possibility of successful struggle on behalf of freedom, to vindicate rights, or to protect oneself from tyrannical abuse is democracy's source of strength.
   e. That the social, legal, and political struggles of disenfranchised people (for example, those who did not own property, people of color, women) to make America live up to its ideals have historically been potent forces strengthening and helping to expand the application of the Constitution. In particular, the freedoms and rights guaranteed in the Constitution with its Bill of Rights have been realized more fully in application through the determined efforts of those who, suffering from marginalization, have battled to gain their rights.
   f. That racism, which has marred U.S. society since its founding, has been a formidable obstacle standing in the way of making the democratic ideals of America a reality for all.

2. **DIVERSITY:** Understanding and respecting others and oneself.

The social studies curriculum should help students to make sense of a multicultural world and their place in it. This includes respect for and appreciation of the cultures of others as well as their own. Although the Committee regards racism as the fundamental schism in American society which the curriculum must address, it shares the view, adopted by the New York City Board of Education in November 1989, that multicultural education should also help students to deal with human differences based upon "linguistic diversity, gender, socioeconomic class, religion, sexual orientation, age, and the perspective and contributions of the physically challenged."

To facilitate this difficult and ongoing process of promoting empathetic sensibility and personal awareness, the curriculum should continually encourage students to ask themselves the following questions.

a. Who am I?

b. What is/ are my cultural heritage(s)?

c. Why should I be proud of it/ them?

d. Why should I develop an understanding of and respect for my own culture(s), language(s), religion, and national origin(s)?

e. Why should I develop an understanding of and respect for the cultures, the languages, the religions, and the national origins of others?

f. What is an American?

g. What holds us together as a nation?

3. **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE:** Understanding personal and social responsibility for economic and social systems, and for their effects.

The social studies curriculum should help students to become productive citizens concerned with their own welfare and that of others. In every society, systems of economic production have consequences for people's access to useful roles, including work, and to the fruits of production. Students must be helped to understand the workings of economic systems.

Like economic arrangements, social understandings (tolerance, justice, racism, sexism) form part of the underlying structure of a society. Students should understand the importance of holding themselves and others accountable for promoting economic fairness and social justice. To bring this about, students should be provided with the tools to assess the moral consequences of their own, their neighbors', and the nation's actions. The full and equal humanity of all persons — including people of color, women, people with disabilities — must be continually emphasized, not only in explicit statements, but also by implication and examples.

a. First, the curriculum must motivate students to reflect on the fact that their actions have consequences and, therefore, that their rights must be balanced by their responsibilities.

b. Second, it must encourage them to ask themselves, What are my civic responsibilities? And, how well am I living up to them?

c. Third, it must inform them sufficiently so that they can also ask and respond to the following: How fairly am I treating others? How fairly am I being treated by others?

d. Fourth, it must equip them with the moral sensitivity to ask: Is my economic well-being at the expense of the well-being of others? What can I and others do to promote greater economic fairness and equity?

4. **GLOBALISM:** Recognizing interdependence and world citizenship.

One of the truisms of the late 20th century is that we live in a global village, where what occurs in any part of the world can affect any other. This globalism implies new opportunities and obligations. To take advantage of the former and face the challenges of the latter, the social studies curriculum must guide students in the direction of responsible world citizenship by helping them to consider the following questions.

a. How does the U.S. interrelate with other nations?

b. In what ways are our communities and others throughout the world interdependent?

c. What forms has economic development taken around the world? What have been their consequences?

d. How does the distribution of resources, technology, and labor make our economy interdependent with the economies of others?

e. What do we need to know and do to participate successfully and responsibly in a constantly changing world?

f. How have the people with whom I share a cultural heritage contributed in the past, and how do they contribute in the present, to the making of the U.S. and the world?

5. **ECOLOGICAL BALANCE:** Recognizing responsibility for the global neighborhood.

Accompanying world citizenship is the responsibility for the maintenance of the globe. This tall order, a critical part of the social studies curriculum, can begin to be addressed by asking students to ponder the following questions.

a. What are the most pressing ecological problems facing the earth, and what are their causes?

b. How are natural resources utilized, allocated, and consumed, within and among nations?

c. How is our ecological fate linked to that of other countries?

d. What are the ecological responsibilities of world citizenship?

e. What are my responsibilities for protecting the global environment?

6. **ETHICS AND VALUES:** The pursuit of fairness and search for responsibility.

Not all the problems in the world, the nation, or our neighborhoods arise from a failure of values. But many do. The social studies curriculum must help the student to distinguish between the consequences of ethical lapses or dysfunctional values, and the results of social or economic problems resulting from (for example) population shifts, technological changes, or industrial policies. Teaching students how to determine accountability for events and their effects on people is as important as teaching them to face responsibility for their own ethical choices and acts. To help students identify appropriate criteria by which to formulate judgments and assess responsibility, the curriculum must provide a base from which they can respond adequately to the questions that follow.

a. How do we demonstrate respect for ourselves and others?

b. What are our civic values? Or, what should they be?

c. How do we distinguish between individual and social responsibility?

d. How do we evaluate historical events that have contradicted or opposed the ideals of pluralism, fair play, equality and justice for all?

e. How do we make judgments about the ethics of social choices that ignore the ideals of pluralism, fair play, equality and justice for all?

7. **THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY:** Seeing oneself as a participant in society.

The social studies curriculum must contribute to the student's sense of belonging in the community, and of that community's belonging in the nation and the world.

a. The curriculum should help students understand themselves and others as responsible members of the following interrelated communities: family; neighborhood; town, city, or metropolitan region; state; nation; and world.

b. The curriculum should also assist students to gain a sense of cultural belonging by:

   1. Helping them recognize the fullness of their identity and heritage, both as members of specific cultural communities and as participants in a common cultural, geographic, national, and world community.
   2. Inviting them to search for the commonalities between their own cultures and those of others.
   3. Enabling them to discover the ways in which individuals and cultural communities move closer to forming a part of a common national culture, resist this process, or are discouraged or barred from engaging in it.

c. The curriculum should provide students with the resources to understand the social divisions that affect them and the overlapping loyalties that form the intricate social web linking them to others.

d. The curriculum should create opportunities for students to understand themselves as people who can bring about change in their communities, the nation, and the world.

In order for these principles to be realized in the social studies as experienced by students, teachers, and others in the learning community, changes will be needed in both content and practical approaches to teaching and learning. These changes are the subject of the following chapter.

III. Principles for Teaching and Learning

Increasing students' understanding of American culture and history, with the diverse cultures, identities, and histories of the groups which comprise American society today, and their understanding of the cultures, identities, and histories of other peoples throughout the world requires substantial changes, both in the selection of subject-matter *content* and in its organization and treatment or *pedagogy*. To change *what* is taught and *how* requires modification not only of New York State syllabi, but also of the conditions of social studies teaching and learning in New York's schools. In this section we offer eight principles to guide pedagogical change consistent with the conceptual foundations for effective multicultural social studies education for all students, as presented in Section II. Achieving effective, multicultural social studies education for all students requires coordinated action on all of these principles.

Principle 1. The selection of subject matter content should be *culturally inclusive*, based on up-to-date scholarship in history, the social sciences, and related fields. This inclusivity should incorporate opposing opinions and divergent interpretations.

Principle 2. The subject matter content selected for inclusion should represent *diversity and unity* within and across groups. Unity and diversity can be illustrated in several ways, including the presentation of events, ideas, and individual philosophies from multiple perspectives. Unity and diversity can also be illustrated through key concepts such as family, interdependence, continuity, and change, studied within different cultural contexts. Both the conflict and the complementarity of diversity and unity can be illustrated by examining (for example) cases in which values embodied in documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution have been salient or at issue.

Principle 3. The subject matter content selected for inclusion should be set within the *context of its time and place*. Taken out of context, events, ideas, and individuals are apt to be misinterpreted and misunderstood. Lack of attention to historical time and to geographic and social place may lead students to misunderstand the sequence of, or relationships among, events, ideas, and individual actions.

Principle 4. The subject matter selected for inclusion should give *priority to depth over breadth*. This principle means that selected topics are studied in ways that are culturally inclusive, represent diversity and unity, and are located in time and place. The topics selected should be chosen to help students attain a firm and clear grasp of central ideas, concepts, movements, and processes in the development of our nation and world. Correspondingly, student assessment in social studies will need to change to emphasize depth rather than superficial coverage.

Principle 5. Multicultural perspectives should infuse the entire curriculum, preK-12. Students should be exposed to multiculturalism in other educational settings such as museums, libraries, and artistic performances.

Principle 6. The subject matter content should be *treated as socially constructed* and therefore tentative — as is all knowledge. Knowledge is the product of human beings located in specific times and places; consequently, much of our subject matter must be understood as tentative.

Principle 7. The teaching of social studies should *draw and build on the experience and knowledge that students bring to the classroom.* Such pedagogy not only validates a student's sense of worth, but also fosters developmentally appropriate and meaningful learning.

Two corollaries of this principle concern continuity and interdisciplinary studies. The organization and treatment of subject matter content should make explicit the connections within and across social studies lessons, units and courses. The continuity provided by explicit connections aids meaningful learning and makes knowledge more usable in problem solving and decision making. Interdisciplinary studies provide continuity, more authentically reflect students' experience out of school, and provide for more efficient use of limited instructional time.

Principle 8. Pedagogy should incorporate a *range of interactive modes of teaching and learning* in order to foster understanding (rather than rote learning), examination of controversy, and mutual learning. The use of many forms of discussion, debate, and discovery encourages students to investigate issues conceptually for the sake of understanding, and not solely for the benefits that follow high marks in school. A central point of education should be to add knowledge and competence and to create ways of critically analyzing all aspects of their lives.

Enabling Conditions

There is much that can be learned from the disappointments of past efforts to improve social studies curriculum and/ or classroom practice. For example, revised syllabi and stronger staff development efforts, by themselves, are necessary but not sufficient to bring about the desired changes. In other words, it is necessary both to design the changes in teaching content and process, and to create the conditions that make the desired practice possible and likely, in keeping with the following points:

1. Public and professional *commitment* to multicultural social studies education is necessary to its realization. Individuals and groups need to understand the ways in which multicultural social studies education is compatible with, if not essential to, their other values and interests. Commitment, based on such understanding, is demonstrated by symbolic and tangible support for multicultural social studies education and the conditions that make it possible.
2. Realizing multicultural social studies education in New York State's schools and classrooms requires *extensive staff development* to create the capacity to carry out the proposed changes. Such staff development would include both preservice and in-service teacher education. It would involve all school personnel who have contact with students (e.g., administrators, clerical staff, bus drivers, aides) and education specialists such as curriculum coordinators, test developers, and teacher educators.

   Staff development should address attitudes as well as knowledge necessary for multicultural social studies education. For example, attitudes supportive of proposed changes include the beliefs that (a) diversity is desirable, (b) both the content and the process of teaching should reflect and respond to diver-

sity, (c) all students can learn and should be helped to do so, and (d) educators' knowledge and pedagogy should be updated continually (in other words, life-long learning is not just for students).

3. Realization of multicultural social studies education requires *human and material resources, including time.* Resources, or the funds to obtain them, are needed to sustain as well as to initiate desired changes.

   Human resources include capable teachers, support personnel, and people in the community who can contribute special expertise — representing the diverse groups that comprise American society.

   Material resources include appropriate textbooks and a range of print, audiovisual, and software options, including multiple primary sources. Our understanding of material resources needs to *move away* from focusing on textbooks as the major sources, a practice that unfortunately treats other, non-text materials as supplementary rather than essential. Multicultural education with multiple perspectives requires that we broaden our understanding of what we consider primary resources to include (for example): pictures and posters, updated maps that accurately portray the sizes of land masses, videos, music, books that are not texts, inexpensive artifacts and woven materials from various cultures, magazines from which teachers can use articles or graphics with their students.

   Time refers to preparation and planning time and class time allocations sufficient to pursue diverse cultural perspectives and experiences. Social studies should represent a significant time commitment at every level of education.

4. Realization of multicultural social studies education requires a *supportive school organization.* Such an organization demonstrates commitment and provides staff development and resources for multicultural social studies education; it makes multicultural education a priority throughout the school, so that multicultural efforts in social studies are reinforced, not undermined, by actions in other subject areas or aspects of school operation.

IV. The State Syllabi

The Syllabi in Relation to the Other Components of a Program

The current New York State Social Studies syllabi include a series of twelve publications: one booklet each for kindergarten and grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11; one for grades 7-8; one for 9-10; one for the first half of grade 12, and another for the second half. The publications vary in length from 73 to 202 pages. They are reviewed and updated periodically by committees of teachers and professors under the guidance of the Bureau of Social Studies Education. All of the current publications carry dates of revision between 1987 and 1989.

Statewide syllabi are not found in most other states, but in New York, with its long history of attempting to direct education from the top down, State syllabi are regarded as very important policy documents. And because such a large and influential state does officially adopt these documents, they acquire much more importance and visibility than do the locally and regionally developed curriculum outlines and syllabi elsewhere. It is vital, therefore, that the syllabi be accurate and comprehensive, and that they reflect up-to-date scholarship. The present syllabi were drawn up with participation of content specialists and practitioners, and the Committee recognizes the effort that was made to be comprehensive and to include subject matter about all parts of the world, about women, and about groups that have been minorities in the U. S. population. Nevertheless, the Committee finds that these syllabi (and the social studies curriculum in general) require revision in order to portray the United States and the world in a balanced and accurate way and to prepare young people in New York State for productive participation in their society and world.

Furthermore, the distance between adoption of State syllabi and enactment in thousands of classrooms is vast, and is affected by a great many variables. The present syllabi acknowledge that they are meant to be used by school district administrators and teachers *in developing their local social studies curriculum.* The structure reveals the care taken to give local districts flexibility to tailor the curriculum around the needs of their students. Many districts do then proceed to develop their own publications in support of the State syllabi; others have followed the syllabi only erratically, influenced by many factors. Individual teachers and departments, of course, make their own outlines and plans. Although the Committee did not study these separate local enactments in any detailed or systematic way, it is well-known that the local curricula often become in fact the documents of greatest importance to classroom practice. Local curriculum guides often digress from the State syllabi and may be better or less adequate. New York City, for example, backs up the State's 134-page syllabus for grades 7-8 with an informative three-volume (1,182-page) "resource guide" for grade 7 alone.

It is not altogether clear what the difference is between a "syllabus" and a "curriculum guide," the two terms sharing a good deal of common meaning. What is clear to the Committee, however, is that the textbooks adopted by local systems unfortunately often constitute the real curriculum guides or syllabi. Although some teachers have at hand copies of local curriculum guides and all theoretically have access to State syllabi, students generally have the textbooks available. In large measure, therefore, the adequacy of the social studies program will depend on the texts in use, and these are of varying quality.

Before turning to the State syllabi, then, it is important to recognize that what is taught and learned in the classroom depends heavily on what teachers and students bring there; textbook quality; teacher preparation; funds available for reasonable-size classes; the controlling impact of local, State, and national testing; the social and political context; and all of the other constraints on and supports for imaginative, scholarly teaching. Those other variables are treated elsewhere in this report.

The Syllabi and the Social Studies: Findings and Recommendations

In the Committee's meetings, all the syllabi, K-12, were scrutinized in detail. Along with this analysis we discussed the ways in which the syllabi are put into use and the related problems of teaching the social studies, especially from the viewpoint of the charge to this Committee. This section states, first, our broad and inclusive basic findings, and then our more specific findings, with regard to syllabi and program.

A. Basic Findings

Number One:

Whether assessed from the perspective of the study of the history and culture of the diverse groups which comprise American society and the world, or from the point of view of any other interest, topic, or discipline, the New York State syllabi as now configured ask schools to accomplish an impossible task, not because of lack of good intent, but simply because the fundamental approach to the teaching of the social studies needs to be changed. No reworking of the particulars will ever be adequate until the basic problem is addressed.

To improve teaching and learning in the social studies, it will not suffice to change the listing of content and topics to be taught, nor to change the emphasis on history or any other field. The perceived goal, itself, must change; for *it has become the teaching of large and ever-increasing amounts of information, without adequate organizing and supporting frameworks.*

Discussion: As this Committee began to review the syllabi in detail, it became increasingly clear that it is never possible to "fit everything in." With regard to diversity, the tendency has been to tell the story of U.S. and global history from the perspective of males and whites, and we quickly began to add important information about women and people of color. But then we must in fairness go to lists of contributions of the many other national, ethnic, religious, cultural and other groups; and as we did so, it became clear that this encyclopedic approach would never fit in the syllabus, let alone the classroom. It would surely fail to meet the expectations of each of the particular groups; and most important, it would not serve the fundamental goal of helping students of all backgrounds and abilities understand and appreciate the concept of cultural diversity within national identity. In this sense, *the information-dominant approach to the social studies curriculum fails as a vehicle for multicultural education in the same way it fails in a full treatment of any other topic.*

Recommendation: It is recommended that the approach to the social studies, K-12, shift the emphasis from the mastery of information to the development of fundamental tools,

concepts, and intellectual processes that make people learners who can approach knowledge in a variety of ways and struggle with the contradictions. This approach will not only provide a much deeper and more informed approach to the topic of diversity; it will also better prepare students to participate in civic life and to appreciate our nation's special strengths and the ways nation-building proceeds over time. In addition, such an approach will provide each teacher and school with more flexibility in selecting content.

Number Two:

Of far greater significance than any State syllabus is the quality and extent of the education of elementary classroom teachers and secondary social studies teachers. *We find that as far as the social studies are concerned, the preservice education is uneven and the opportunities for continued professional and intellectual development on the job often meager.* More disturbing, the support system for those teaching children of greatest need is often the least adequate.

Discussion: More than syllabi, textbooks, curriculum guides, or lesson plans, the teacher is the dominant variable in the classroom. Although the Committee heard much about the good ideas and dedicated work of the teachers of the State, we also saw ample evidence of the problems resulting from inadequate preservice and in-service education. Nearly everyone acknowledges the problems of teacher education, yet the problem seems no nearer solution today than half a century ago.

Recommendations:

First, preparation for school teaching is first and foremost the responsibility of the colleges and universities. *The time is long past when departments and schools of teacher education and departments and colleges of liberal arts can enjoy the luxury of separation.* In universities where the teacher educators and the historians and social scientists (for example) share joint responsibility for preparing educators, the program is soundly based. In the places where the parties waste energy in public attacks on each other, teachers and students suffer. Preparation for school teaching requires the close collaboration of the separate parts of the universities, as the first step.

Second, the State must review certification in the social studies to ensure that the preparing institutions do the job. This is harder in social studies than in many other fields, since the same teacher is often called upon to teach a broad range of course content, from American history to Asian studies. Teacher certification rules do not insure the broad-based academic and pedagogical training needed. The lack of congruence between the standard college "majors" and the eventual assignment of teachers on the job may mean that a teacher can major in sociology but end up teaching the 9th- and 10th-grade global studies curriculum — never having taken a single course in Asian studies (for example). It is also clear that if social studies teaching is to be more successful in strengthening multicultural education, then multiple perspectives must be part of the education of the teacher.

Third, there needs to be significant expansion of in-service education for teachers. This expansion should include more opportunities for formal advanced graduate study in the academic areas, expanded programs of summer seminars and independent study for teachers (along the lines of the Federal programs of the National Endowment for the Humanities), and workshops on specific topics related to the teacher's field, to a variety of teaching assignments, and especially to the understanding of peoples and cultures not familiar to the teacher. Of special importance to the improvement of multicultural education is the need for classroom-focused workshops and training programs. To be successful, such programs should draw deeply on the best contemporary scholarship as well as on the experience of master classroom teachers.

Just to cite one example of the way in which sound scholarship can inform practice, it is still commonplace to hear teachers in social studies classes talk about "races" of people. Yet most social scientists today regard the concept of race as essentially outdated,

simplistic, and unhelpful. Students need to see "race" as a cultural phenomenon, not a physical description, and need to be able to examine its history and how it has been used. Such an examination can lead to a better understanding of the stunting effect of racism on U.S. society and its people, including (as a notable example) the devaluation of individuals on the basis of the color of their skin. Until this kind of scholarship is explicitly made part of teachers' knowledge base, it will not be reflected in classrooms; whole generations of children will continue to be miseducated on this fundamental concept; and information which is essential (although not in itself sufficient) to heal our society will be largely unknown.

Number Three:

Until recently, the traditional posture of the State Education Department and Board of Regents has been one of top-down prescription and control, especially as manifested in prescription of required content and enforcement and control through an elaborate web of State testing of content. This approach has resulted in a remarkable mix of success and failure. In many ways our State has been a leader in educational quality and standards, yet at the same time the focus on central control has led to an excessive dependence on what comes out of Albany. Regulation has been mistaken for improvement. In a broad and comprehensive field like the social studies, and especially in relation to the emergence of newly recognized needs such as the prime interest of this Committee, the top-down approach has narrowed and limited the initiative and response of the State's 731 districts and thousands of schools.

Recommendation: The Committee recommends that the new State approach as represented in the Regents New Compact for Learning should be studied for its potential in achieving meaningful change. *For school improvement, the State Education Department must become an agency to encourage, support, and lead the schools to carry out their decentralized, day-to-day work in imaginative, reflective, and carefully evaluated ways.*

B. Specific Findings and Illustrations with Regard to the Present New York State Syllabi and Social Studies Program

This subsection serves its purpose by being illustrative, not exhaustive; the correction of each instance of the general problems cited here will be the work of a later phase of this project (whether re-working the current documents, or devising a new framework along the lines recommended by this Committee).

Number One:

Finding: Need for Multiple Perspectives. The Committee noted how frequently social studies slips into a "we-they" framework. All too often when communities are perceived as monolithic, it is common to teach from one perspective, usually that of the so-called dominant culture. For example, in the primary grades children examine neighborhoods and communities. Educators need to be aware that many of the typical features cited for study (such as banks, government buildings, department stores, and other major economic institutions) may not necessarily be present in inner-city or rural communities. Students need to be exposed to the strengths and potential of what does exist in their community, despite obstacles such as drugs and high visibility of crime. What does exis in the students' immediate real world should be used to help them become more aware of and sensitive to their civic responsibilities and possibilities in building their community. To take another instance, the story of the early colonization in the eastern U. S. has too often been told from the perspective of the colonists, not the Native Americans already settled on the land. Or the story of the western United States is told as one of westward expansion, assuming the perspective of the migrating Easterners and disregarding the native men and women already there or the long-established Hispanic influence and settlements in the West.

Related Finding: Unequal regard for the importance of national/ regional boundaries and distinctions. For example:

- In the syllabus for grades 9-10, all nations south of the United States are lumped together in the unit entitled "Latin America," tending to omit the information that a number of islands in the Caribbean and nations in Central and South America trace their traditions to non-Latin European nations, to Africa, India, and Indonesia, as well as to native roots. Attention is rarely paid to the complex and controversial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States.
- The syllabus for grades 9/10 suggests (page 124): "Using pictures of Greek, Roman, and Oriental art and architecture, students could identify similarities." Does the term "Oriental" refer to Asians? If so, which Asians? The reference should be to specific Asian people, corresponding with the Greeks and Romans.
- Northern Africa often is implicitly or explicitly incorporated in the "Middle East" in the teaching of social studies at grade 6.

Related Finding: A disregard for the understanding and study of indigenous social, political, economic, and technological structures, and the precolonial histories of indigenous peoples. For example, the treatment of the European colonization of Africa in the syllabi inadequately addresses the great loss of lives and the eradication of many varieties of traditional culture and knowledge. Similarly, the long and rich history of India before the British conquest is not properly treated. The K-6 syllabi, for example, focus on celebrations such as Thanksgiving and Columbus Day without examining other perspectives than those of Europeans, such as the perspectives of Native Americans.

Related Finding: Effects are often seen as unidirectional (with the European participants as the actors) rather than bi-directional. For example, the syllabus for grades 9/10 recommends that teachers explore the effects of European rule on Africa with their students, but the effects that contact with Africa had on Europe — or the dehumanizing effects on Europeans of their role as colonizers — are not mentioned. In the syllabus for grades 7/8, the connection between Toussaint L'Ouverture's defeat of Napoleon in Haiti and the Louisiana Purchase is not made. In the grade 9/10 syllabus, the influence of Islam upon the religious, cultural, economic and political systems of lands extending from Spain to Sumatra is highlighted, but not the impact upon Islam of the peoples of these lands.

Related Finding: Complex and large-scale issues are often simplified because they are seen from a single, implicit perspective. For example, superficial discussions of the origins and eventual abolition of slavery in the Americas frequently omit the economic basis for the persistence of slavery as an institution. The syllabi for grades 7/8 and 11 do not adequately address the incarceration of Japanese Americans; nor do they discuss the deportation from the U.S. of thousands of people of Mexican origin in the 1920s, regardless of citizenship.

Recommendation: Social studies should be taught from multiple perspectives, global in scope. Beyond the successes, the complexities and shortcomings of U.S. policy should be explored.

Number Two:

Finding: Language Sensitivity. Although specific terms fall into and out of currency and the language of the syllabi may not be deliberately or intentionally sexist, racist, or prejudicial from the point of view of diversity and inclusiveness, the language used is often dated, narrow, and in some cases insensitive. For example, the syllabi refer to "slaves"

or "the everyday life of a slave," as if being a slave were one's role or status, similar to that of gardener, cook, or carpenter. To refer, rather, to "enslaved persons" would call forth the essential humanity of those enslaved, helping students to understand from the beginning the true meaning of slavery (in contrast to the sentimental pictures of contented slaves, still found in some texts).

Many geographical terms are Western-derived, sometimes almost unconsciously. Terms like "the Far East" should be replaced by ones like "East Asia." Ideally, even the term "Middle East" should become "Southwest Asia and North Africa." To Native Americans, the Western Hemisphere is not "the New World." It was the newly arriving Europeans following Christopher Columbus who were new in the Western Hemisphere. Should the term "America" to mean only the United States be used sparingly and should the *hemispheric* meaning of the term be the usual usage?

Differential use of adjectives, the passive as opposed to the active voice, and other syntactic and semantic usages can betray unintended, unrecognized, but nonetheless real bias. For example, in the syllabus for grades 9/10, the African climate is described as essentially hostile to human migration ("There are few jungle environments in Africa and nearly 45% of the continent consists of desert or dry steppe . . ."), while that of Western Europe is described in the following terms: "Western Europe's environment exhibits great diversity in terms of physical geography and climate. Europeans have used technology to reshape their physical environment. Most of Western Europe has easy access to warm water ports . . . ." Why is desert seen as a hostile environment, but not freezing cold and snow?

Perhaps the most persistent and fundamental language problem in the teaching of social studies is the use of the terms "minority," "minorities," "minority persons" or "minority groups." Although commonly used, such terms nonetheless establish in the minds of all students inaccurate perceptions of the world and, increasingly, of our own nation. If social studies are to be taught from a global perspective, many of the so-called "minorities" in America are more accurately described as part of the world's majorities, a profoundly important point for young Americans who will come to maturity in the next century.

Recommendation: The syllabi and all related support materials and locally developed curricula should be regularly reviewed to insure that the language used is accurate and reflects current scholarship. Classroom instruction must include sensitivity to and awareness of the changing legitimacy of terms, such as the shift in meaning of terms such as "third world," "Negro," and "Oriental."

Number Three:

Finding: A limited range of examples. There is a tendency to use white male examples of achievement and to leave out examples of the contributions of women and of the many men and women of other than the traditional white groups. When women and people of color are mentioned, they are often marginalized as "other" groups "also" to be studied, implying that all the remaining content must not be about them. For example: the syllabus for grade 11 notes that "Inventions . . . in the 19th century were often the product of individual genius . . . , including that of lesser known, minority inventors." It recommends, under "Model Activities" on labor unionization: "Also examine the roles of women and racial/ethnic minorities at this time in labor history." Standard definitions of "achievement," too, omit the seemingly ordinary lives of people of all groups — lives which, in aggregate, help us understand the human experience of a time and place.

As the January 1991 statement of the Executive Board of the Organization of American Historians points out:

> The history curricula of public schools should be constructed around the principle that all people have been significant actors in

> human events. Students should therefore understand that history is not limited to the study of dominant political, social, and economic elites. It also encompasses the individual and collective quests of ordinary people for a meaningful place for themselves in their families, in their communities, and in the larger world.

Similarly, the multicultural complexity of individual cultures must be noted. Again, as observed in the statement of the Organization of American Historians, "the cultures of all peoples have become intermingled over time, often in subtle and complex ways." And although some will agree with V.S. Naipaul in seeing a new, emerging "universal civilization" (*The New York Times*, November 5, 1990), dualities (or multiplicities) are everywhere apparent, as in the case of modern Japan, which may be seen as an "Asian" culture with "Western" technology.

Early in its work the *Committee agreed that to reflect a multicultural perspective, the syllabi need not attempt to provide an encyclopedic list of every contribution by every person and group. Rather, as the emphasis shifts from an information-based to a conceptual curriculum, the syllabi should offer many appropriate examples of the experiences of many people and groups.* Further, the Committee believes that it can be particularly intriguing to students to examine with care what the elements are that hold together a nation or culture in spite of what are often great differences. This surely is one of the central questions to be considered in any course in American history.

Recommendation: The syllabi and other materials should provide teachers with several examples, drawn from different peoples, as appropriate to each topic. In this way, what begins to take shape in the mind of the student is an appreciation of the broader range of contributions of many people and groups to the building of our nation and the world.

Number Four:

Finding: The visual environment of the classroom and school is a major educational element. Maps and pictures hang on classroom walls, silently sending messages all day, all year. Many of the maps used in social studies are out of date; they often portray areas only from one perspective, not unlike the famous *New Yorker* cover showing the rest of the nation as a minor place west of the Hudson. For example, a map representing North America in 1700 might give the impression that nobody lived in the areas which were home to native peoples. Similarly, photographs on walls that show only white male inventors and heroes teach their own powerful, distorted lessons.

Recommendation: The visual environments of schools should reflect multicultural perspectives.

Number Five:

Finding: Social studies teaching becomes more powerful to the extent that it is linked to other parts of the curriculum. At the elementary level, this is contrary to a current tendency to split the elementary day into small segments and separate subjects. The social studies provide an especially powerful center to the elementary curriculum, offering natural links to literature and language as well as providing a context for science, mathematics, and the arts. Much of the understanding basic to appreciation of human diversity and multicultural education is best achieved by unified, interrelated teaching.

Recommendation: The elementary schools should be encouraged to teach an integrated or interrelated curriculum. At the middle and upper levels every effort should be made to relate social studies topics and concepts to teaching in the other subjects. Such an approach lends itself to the reflection of multiple cultural perspectives and awareness of the achievements of many cultures.

Number Six:

Finding: Too great an emphasis on educationally inappropriate assessment. In its most insidious form there is the problem of misdirected or misused testing, as when tests intended to be used to evaluate social studies *programs* are transformed and interpreted as tests of *individual* pupil achievement. This dysfunctional assessment poses a special problem in fields like the social studies, where concepts and attitudes are a central concern. Too often, tests focus on pieces of readily "testable" information, or worse, simply on reading ability alone. Both State and local testing predominantly focus on detail, on the particulars, and generally rely on the short answer, often in machine-scored format. Such narrow assessment does not effectively evaluate teaching and learning in the social studies, where judgment, perspective, and content are so important. As has been observed in schooling, easily measured objectives drive out less easily measured objectives. Curricula become ever more centered on the particulars, driving out the deeper kind of relational thinking so necessary in the social sciences and history. In addition to this inappropriate emphasis on testing for details and particulars is the equally troublesome problem of test bias. The Committee recommends that assessment in the social studies meet the intent set forth in such materials as *Bias Issues in Test Development*, a publication of National Evaluation Systems developed for the Illinois State Board of Education.

Recommendation: Assessment should evaluate the student's ability to analyze, synthesize, and organize information, to reason and to think critically. At various points in the K-12 program, social studies assessment should ascertain the level of achievement in content, concepts and skills as outlined by the syllabi. Assessment should include various forms such as improved multiple-choice tests, portfolios, hands-on problem-solving projects, and professional evaluation developed by the classroom teacher. All assessment should reflect multiple perspectives. Each local district should conduct a comprehensive social studies assessment program rather than relying only on State tests. State testing programs should be revised.

Number Seven:

Finding: The K-12 program has, and should continue to use, a comprehensive developmental approach to the social studies. As other sections of this report have noted, each grade level needs scrutiny with regard to the principles governing the social studies curriculum and to the practice of teaching and learning. For example, the use of multiple perspectives should be instituted at the primary level and continued throughout the program.

Although all grade levels must be revised, certain levels of the program were found to be of particular concern. Without jeopardizing the integrity of the scope and sequence of the K-12 program, these areas require special consideration. For example, the syllabi for grades 5 and 6 were found lacking in multicultural perspectives, yet too encompassing in terms of specific content. The present fifth-grade syllabus is a study of the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Latin America, with the content organized from historic, social, geographic, economic and political perspectives. The present sixth-grade syllabus includes the study of eastern and western Europe and the Middle East through the same content perspectives. Other regions of the world are essentially omitted. As an alternative, much more focus might be placed on geography and its effects on the cultures and economics of each region, thus providing a more unified framework for study.

The current curriculum as outlined in the syllabus for grades 9/10 is seriously defective and needs major reworking. There are problems related to terminology, accuracy of information, and sensitivity to the treatment of the diverse groups being studied; examples have been cited earlier. The overall structure and organization of the material also give rise to great concern. Too much subject matter is presented, and the resulting "coverage" leads to superficial treatment. For example, along with the major K-12 concepts

and skills, content in grades 9/10 includes eight units: Africa, South Asia, East Asia, Latin America, The Middle East, Western Europe, The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and The World Today. Each unit consists of five comprehensive themes: the physical/historical setting, the dynamics of change, contemporary nations and cultures, economic development, and the regions within the global context. Teachers and students alike find this program a frustrating exercise, and the 9/10 program must be revised to produce a coherent and focused course of study.

The syllabus for grade 11 was also found to be difficult to link with the work in American Studies in grades 7 and 8. After finishing grade 8, students often do not retain the information needed as building blocks for later, more intense study; teachers must review the earlier material in order to make possible the comprehensive understanding intended in the grade 11 syllabus. Members of the Committee also differed on the adequacy of the amount of American history included.

Recommendation: A general examination of the K-12 program is needed in order to promote revision according to the findings and recommendations of this Committee. The State Education Department should immediately establish work groups to make revisions designed to produce a coherent and meaningful course of study. Grades 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11 should receive special attention. Recent events in Europe should be included in material now covered in grades 5 and 6, with attention to multiple perspectives. Regional studies at this level should include areas of the entire Eastern Hemisphere. The syllabus for grade 11 should provide scope for teachers to incorporate the background necessary to understand the development of U.S. history. Content coverage throughout the program should be limited and focused, providing teachers with a range of choices, each including diverse perspectives, in order to promote understanding and the development of critical thought.

V. Guidelines for Implementation

As earlier sections of this report have documented, the current State social studies syllabi present problems in content and approach that must be addressed. In a large sense, however, the nature and quality of students' experiences in social studies depend most on the day-to-day decisions and actions of the adults who deliver and manage those educational experiences. The syllabi should inform and guide these decisions and actions; but — as disappointments of past efforts to improve social studies curriculum and practice have shown — it is necessary both to design the changes in teaching content and process, and to create the conditions that make the desired practice possible and likely. The following points should guide this effort:

1. There must be institutional *commitment* and appropriate policies.

Public and professional *commitment* to multicultural social studies education is necessary to its realization. Individuals and groups need to understand the ways in which multicultural social studies education is compatible with, if not essential to, their other values and interests. Commitment, based on such understanding, is demonstrated by symbolic and tangible support for multicultural social studies education and the conditions that make it possible, and must include the following:

- The Board of Regents should issue a position paper strongly endorsing multicultural education and establishing it as a priority. The statement should make it clear that gender, sexual orientation, and disability are included.

  For more than 20 years the Board of Regents has consistently made clear its support for global perspectives and multicultural understanding as educational aims. In keeping with this series of policy statements and with the Regents Goals for elementary secondary education, the Social Studies Review and Development Committee now urges the Board of Regents to advance the position that its concern with multicultural education is driven by concern for making the curriculum responsive to the changing nature of our conceptions of knowledge and what it means to be an educated person. We support the idea that a curriculum which is culturally inclusive is likely to be more engaging for a larger number of students. We agree that such content may make some of our students feel better about themselves and their learning experiences. We strongly concur with the argument that such an inclusionary curriculum speaks to the democratic value of social justice. However, the most compelling pedagogical argument for multicultural education flows from the requirement that educational experiences contribute to students' capacity to analyze indepen-

dently and critically their experiences in pursuit of *understanding* as well as knowing. The capacity to view phenomena from multiple perspectives is the precursor to understanding and wise judgment. The eminent Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget taught us that perspective-taking and the capacity to handle multiple perspectives are essential characteristics of formal operations, which he identified as the highest level of cognitive development. An appropriately developed multicultural curriculum can be a powerful tool to foster this capacity in students.

- All local school boards should adopt a policy statement of commitment to global multicultural education across the curriculum. Multicultural education and global education policies are every bit as vital in districts predominantly of one culture as in more diverse communities.
- The Board of Regents should expect that all districts use cultural inclusion as a criterion in selecting texts and other instructional materials and should urge textbook publishers and vendors of other instructional materials to provide materials and aids that assist in the teaching of social studies from a multicultural perspective. In selecting materials, local districts should purchase those that are consistent with these goals.
- Classroom teachers and supervisors need to make a conscious commitment to provide multiple perspectives in teaching social studies and to develop their students' capacities to take multiple perspectives. Here again, special importance is attached to such approaches regardless of the makeup of particular communities. The perspective is vital to all.

2. Appropriate curriculum content, organization, and structure must be established.

- In order to accommodate all of the features of a social studies curriculum necessary to honor a commitment to multiple perspectives and multiple cultures, attention will need to be given to the content, organization and structure of the curriculum. It will not be acceptable to continue to add specific content and more examples. Rather, *what is required is early agreement on the central and major themes and concepts which are essential to intellectual competence in the social studies.* Information, experiences and knowledge should be sampled around these themes and concepts with the purpose of enabling students to develop in-depth understanding. Specific content should be selected from diverse perspectives and cultures, so that all students are exposed to the richness and diversity of the human experience and no student is deprived of educational experiences in the context of cultural perspectives with which she/he can identify.
- Under the guidance of the Committee, work groups of practitioners and selected experts in all disciplines and cultures should be established to develop appropriate syllabi and curriculum guidelines. Since the preparation of these guides and syllabi will take two years or more, in the meantime the Department should immediately make available supplementary materials and teaching aids to assist teachers in strengthening multicultural education and to correct the most obvious shortcomings in existing materials (documented elsewhere in this report).
- Social studies are integral to the development of basic skills and must be given the same level of consideration as any other key area of study, such as reading and mathematics. Instruction in social studies should be given comparable time with these other subjects in the classroom daily. Often a multidisciplinary approach might be helpful in meeting this requirement. Reading, for example, can be structured to include content from social studies instruction, thereby fur-

ther increasing the school's emphasis on the social studies. Similar opportunities exist in mathematics, using social studies data, charts and graphs.

- The State Education Department is responsible for providing education, encouragement and leadership for multicultural education, district by district, including coordination of the diverse instructional resources. Since such responsibility is meaningless without the capacity to discharge it, the Department must be adequately funded. Newer means of communication (such as statewide database and other networking approaches) also should be deployed so that information on multicultural resources can be made easily accessible.
- Cultural and arts institutions should be encouraged to address multicultural perspectives as they develop collections and plan to implement their exhibits and programs.

3. Appropriate and relevant assessment procedures, standards, and control points must be established.

- The State Education Department will need to develop an assessment program which will be meaningful, supportive of the goals and purposes of the revised social studies curriculum, and reflective of the diversity in the student population. Such an assessment program should be based on an agreement with respect to the core knowledge, skills and understandings considered to be fundamental to the developed intellect. Students should have the broadest possible opportunity to demonstrate such knowledge, skills and understandings, using a variety of perspectives and means of their own choosing. Options and choices should be a critical feature of this program. The description and diagnosis of knowledge and conceptual understanding should be the controlling purposes of the assessment program. The following examples are meant to illustrate what assessment probes should provide:
  a. Diversity in content, contexts, demands and cultural reference of assessment tasks;
  b. Multiplicity in the perspectives from which task demands can be presented and responded to;
  c. Critical sampling from canonical and noncanonical knowledge and techniques;
  d. Opportunity to identify from indigenous experiences examples of core concepts, knowledge, and skills;
  e. Individual and cooperative performance opportunities;
  f. Self-designed tasks from the test-taker's own store of knowledge, skills, and understanding;
  g. Assessment of competence in knowledge, skill and understanding that is not dependent on communicative competence in a single language.
- Realization of multicultural social studies education requires *compatible local control points*. These control points include:
  a. *Accountability* — in the forms of school, administrator, and teacher assessment;
  b. *Student assessment* — by school, district, State, or nation, by means compatible with the processes and goals of multicultural social studies education;
  c. *Credentialing* — of administrators, teachers, and other education personnel.

Compatible control points facilitate multicultural social studies education by demonstrating commitment and encouraging supportive school organization. They make the

provision of staff development and resources more likely. Without compatible control points, it is unlikely that much progress will be made toward multicultural social studies education. Compatible control points are a key to the credibility of any multicultural education effort.

4. Adequate human and other resources and support systems are required.

Realization of multicultural social studies education requires a *supportive school organization* at all levels. Such an organization demonstrates commitment and provides staff development and resources for multicultural social studies education; it makes multicultural education a priority throughout the school, so that multicultural efforts in social studies are reinforced, not undermined, by actions in other subject areas or aspects of school operation.

- Continued and improved collaborative efforts should be encouraged between cultural, governmental and arts institutions and schools to improve the accessibility of historical, cultural and arts resources for all students.
- School districts should be encouraged to reflect on their own staffs the cultural diversity of our society and to draw upon these resources of their own and other faculties.
- Teachers should especially be encouraged to enroll in seminars and summer institutes to increase their understanding of African, Asian, Native American, and Latino history and culture, both in their original and in their worldwide manifestations, with special emphasis on indigenous perspectives and the use of materials by indigenous authors.
- Principals and supervisors need to provide support to teachers as they strive to incorporate multicultural instruction into their programs. The public advocacy of such approaches and their encouragement among parents and community leaders is an important function of local administrators.
- For the program outlined in this report to succeed, the State Education Department and local districts should be mindful of the need for resource persons who are expert in multicultural and global education, to coordinate staff development and instructional resources.
- The Department should begin a nationwide search to identify and distribute to schools print and nonprint multicultural educational resources, including those available in libraries, museums, historical societies, public broadcasting stations, arts organizations and state and local governmental agencies.

5. Staff development (preservice and in-service) is essential.

Realizing multicultural social studies education in New York State's schools and classrooms requires *extensive staff development* to create the capacity to carry out the proposed changes. Such staff development would include, but not be limited to, preservice and in-service teacher education. It would involve all school personnel who have contact with students (e.g., administrators, clerical staff, bus drivers, aides) and education specialists such as curriculum coordinators, test developers, and teacher educators.

Staff development would address attitudes as well as knowledge for multicultural social studies education. For example, attitudes supportive of proposed changes include the beliefs that (a) diversity is desirable, (b) both the content and the process of teaching should reflect and respond to diversity, (c) all students can learn and should be helped to do so, and (d) educators' knowledge and pedagogy should be updated continually (in other words, lifelong learning is not just for students).

In-service Teacher Preparation:

- As syllabi are developed, a program of ongoing in-service preparation in multicultural education and education from multicultural perspectives should also be developed for district and school staff. This should include general and specialized advanced studies in the academic disciplines comprising the social studies as well as workshops, conferences, and seminars focused on classroom applications.
- The preparation of persons in leadership positions has been found useful, as has the use of workshop facilitators and multicultural education teachers. Staff development activities need to be oriented to a variety of perspectives, especially those which have traditionally been absent from the curriculum.

Possible sources for such in-service education include school districts, teacher centers, BOCES, professional organizations, colleges and universities.

Preservice Teacher Preparation:

Although the full dimensions of needed reforms in teacher education are beyond the scope of this report, the Committee stresses that as a baseline, appropriate preparation for those entering social studies teaching should include a broad general liberal arts background and completion of an appropriate specialization in history or one of the social sciences. Such a combined undergraduate and graduate program should also include appropriate study of child and adolescent development, the practice of teaching, and courses leading to an understanding of teaching from a multicultural perspective. No single institutional model is endorsed, but colleges and universities should be urged to think afresh about ways to strengthen the academic preparation of social studies teachers.

6. And, yes, adequate funding must be provided.

As has been clearly set forth, realization of multicultural social studies education requires *human and material resources, including time*. Resources, or the funds to obtain them, are needed to sustain as well as to initiate desired changes. Human resources include capable teachers, support personnel, and people in the community who can contribute special expertise — representing the diverse groups that comprise American society. The resources must also include access to supervision, curriculum development, staff development, and forward-looking leadership for our schools.

Material resources include appropriate textbooks and a range of print, audiovisual, and software options, including multiple primary sources. Our understanding of material resources needs to move away from focusing on textbooks alone. Non-text materials and journals, trade books and other resources are essential. Multicultural education with multiple perspectives requires that we broaden our understanding of what we consider primary resources to include (for example): pictures and posters, updated maps that accurately portray the sizes of land masses, videos, music, books that are not texts, inexpensive artifacts and woven materials from various cultures, magazines from which teachers can use articles or graphics with their students. *Time* refers to preparation and planning time and class time allocations sufficient to pursue diverse cultural perspectives and experiences. Social studies should represent a significant time commitment at every level of education. Thus, although much more can be accomplished using present resources and deeper personal commitment, provision also must be made for dollars.

VI. Reflections on the Work of the NYS Social Studies Syllabus Review Committee

Statement
by Edmund W. Gordon and Francis Roberts
Cochairpersons

In agreeing to chair this remarkable review committee, we never asked nor expected that all of us would agree on every conclusion. It is, however, the power of rational discourse in the context of open and democratic discussion that accounts for the high degree of consensus among the 24 members of this Committee. Most of us agree on most of the analysis and recommendations. We are a group of very diverse people who differ in color, ethnicity, gender, geographic regions of the State, personal histories, perspectives and special interests. Our report represents a conception of what we feel the study of geography, history and the social sciences should become. Because we are so diverse and because our degree of agreement is an example of how the sharing of experiences, knowledge and perspectives can be brought to serve productive ends, several of us have agreed to prepare additional personal commentaries which elaborate special perspectives which may not be fully captured in our report. *The following personal comments reflect the richness of the traditions and concerns; the common, complementary, and sometimes contradictory values; and the different ways of seeing things, which are not only parts of, but are encircled and protected by, our democratic society. These commentaries should be read as a part of our report and as a reflection of the complexities we face as we seek to know the human experience, to understand it in all its variance, and to help others to do so.*

As the Cochairpersons of this very challenging enterprise, we too have elected to identify a few of the currents which we have observed to flow throughout our deliberations. The Committee does not have a consensus position on these issues, but it seems that these concerns are important enough to be a part of the continuing discourse concerning the place of attention to cultural and other sources of human diversity in the social studies curriculum.

We are asked to consider how the social studies syllabi of the public schools of New York State should be modified, the better to ensure that our children understand and know about themselves, other people in their state and country, and the cultures and histories of the world in which they live. This very reasonable request and goal led us into discussions and debates concerning the nature of the canon as well as the knowledge which it enshrines. A high degree of importance attaches to the integrity of the canon, but problems arise when we consider the boundaries of the canon. Thus ques-

tions concerning the validity of various knowledge components constantly stood just beneath the surface of many of our discussions. Some of us were more comfortable with knowledge and sources that have been recognized and certified by the academy. Others repeatedly called attention to new knowledge, new sources and new voices and their claim to validity equal to that assigned to the traditional and the hegemonic. The tension between these two positions is not a new phenomenon. The history of human societies, our own nation included, is marked by debates and even wars over different conceptions of truth and views of reality. It is a measure of human progress that we have arrived at the stage of societal development that in democratic societies, these debates are verbal and written and not the subject of physical combat. However, they are none the less critical, in part, because in modern societies the changing conception of what it means to be an educated and intelligent person includes our capacity to entertain and understand phenomena from perspectives different from our own, on our way to arriving at wise judgments and the reconciliation of differences. Without falling into the futile debate concerning whose canon shall be taught, we have elevated the question to include pedagogical problems concerning how we enable learners to respect and deal with multiple perspectives, i.e., multiple ways of seeing things and using different sources of knowledge better to understand experiences and information. This is not to argue that all information is necessarily valid. Rather, we argue that all information deserves to be understood in the context within which it has been developed. This assertion is advanced, in part, because for much of our knowledge validity is difficult to establish independent of context.

This plea for tolerance and openness in the examination of ideas and perspectives came into conflict with another set of important purposes and values. One of the long-recognized functions of the social studies is to prepare students for citizenship in support of the continuing effort at nation-building. *We recognize that nation-building, especially in so diverse a populace, requires that we give attention, not so much to our differences as to our commonalities.* Some of us feel strongly that social studies should stress the nation's common values and traditional conceptions of our history. Others of us feel that those values and conceptions have become truncated as a result of the hegemonic ascendance of cultural elements, values and world views that tend to be associated with our European ancestry alone. Thus the insistence on the inclusion of broader perspectives and non-dominant knowledge sources. But the question arises as to whether we can conjointly serve both *pluribus* and *unum*. The consensus arrived at in this Committee suggests that we can. For example, we may be mistaken in our association of the "flowering of human civilization" in Europe as an achievement of European people alone. Old, and certainly more recent knowledge sources indicate that what flowered in Europe was the combination and culmination of cultural and technological developments from virtually every part of the world. What should be celebrated in the remarkable achievements that now symbolize modernity are the accomplishments of the human species, built, one upon the other, of centuries of human conceptual and technological developments. Thus ethnic cheerleading could be replaced by human celebration as we uncouple specific human achievements at one point in history from the immediate and sometimes fortuitous context in which they have been presumptively "first" observed.

Another line of reasoning, as well, illumines the duty of schools to aid in nation-building by preparing the young for citizenship. We refer to one of the fundamental tenets of democratic government, viz., government with the consent of the governed. We realize today that consent cannot be considered to count unless it is informed consent. We assert that informed consent cannot be based upon ignorance, or even upon simply knowing or believing. Informed consent requires understanding born of critical analysis and synthesis and critical interpretation. Such intellectual competencies do not arise from training in established traditions, values and beliefs, or from the teaching of consensus history. Education to develop intellects capable of informed consent and choice requires exposure to diverse opinions, multiple perspectives and situated histories, where the learning tasks involve comparative analysis, contextual validation, heuristic exploration, and judicious reflection. *We want our students to become thinking participants in, rather than trained validators of, decisions concerning the affairs of the nation. Such richly intelligent beings are very likely to recognize and respect the important things that*

we share in common as well as the unique things that make us different. In a similar manner, they are, perhaps, more likely to choose the common good than are persons with less well-developed abilities. If society cannot expect such qualities of its educated members, then we are in very serious trouble.

A ubiquitous issue in many of our discussions concerned differences in gender and their implications for social studies. None of us was prepared to argue that gender differences were unimportant. We recognized that socialization experiences associated with sex roles make for distinct perspectives and behaviors. We acknowledged that the perspectives of girls and women are often absent or neglected in much of the knowledge base used in school. Yet we did not wish to let issues related to sex-role differences, taken separately, come to dominate the work of the Committee. We were reminded that, too often, when matters of cultural, ethnic and language bias are addressed and attention is called to the importance of sex-role differences and sexism, the sexism question dominates discussion and action. Thus we treated sex-role groupings as having certain characteristics in common with cultural groupings, and as the objects of sexist discrimination, but in this report we have not emphasized these concerns. However, we are mindful that chauvinistic attitudes and behaviors toward differences in gender or sex-role preference, and associated sexist practices, are destructive, unjust and inappropriate. In addition, we recognize that the interaction of sexism with racism puts members of low-status cultural, ethnic and language groups in double, even triple jeopardy. An understanding of these complex pressures is necessary in order to understand the experiences of such persons, especially women belonging to ethnic and language groups that have traditionally been minorities in the United States.

Some of us were shocked by the depth of feelings about diverse renditions of history. Some of us who are comfortable in the belief that the history that we know is valid were offended by the assertion that much of that history is incomplete or false. Some of us who feel that the standard histories have excluded or misrepresented important players found it difficult to assert our claims dispassionately. In the views represented by some of us, it appears that much of the dominant or traditional information available to us is viewed with doubt, skepticism and distrust because it does not fit comfortably with the experiences of some, while for others, it is simply counter-intuitive. Deciding what to teach under such existential circumstances confronts us with problems of monumental complexity. Even more problematic for the teaching and learning of history and the social studies is the ease with which information, ideology and belief become comingled in the minds of people whose interests are at stake — sometimes so much that these concepts, despite their differential order, come to be interchangeable one for the other. Although we were generally in agreement that histories tend to reflect the interests and perspectives of those who write them, there was a ubiquitous undercurrent of concern for the recognition of historical and other truth.

It may well be a limited understanding of the meaning of the word `truth' that will create the most difficulty as we seek to reconcile our search for `truth' with our conception of education as being directed at the development of intellect and understanding. *Unlike earlier periods when one demonstrated one's intellect by how much one knew, i.e., how many facts one had at her/his command, increasingly we recognize the mark of intellect to be the capacity independently to analyze, manipulate, synthesize and critically interpret information in the interest of problem solving.* It is not that facts, knowledge structures, are unimportant; it is that they are insufficient and often so situation-bound as to limit their utility in understanding and problem solving. Thus the concern for multiple truths, situated knowledge, contextual validity and multiple perspectives in our study of most phenomena of the social sciences and history. This almost contradictory juxtaposition of positivism and relativism in the production, interpretation and understanding of information is one of the fundamental sources of complexity in the teaching and learning of social studies. Our efforts at coming to some consensus concerning revisions in the social studies syllabi and curriculum in New York State must be viewed in the contexts of such complexities. The report of the Committee enables us to move ahead. It does not provide definitive solutions.

In the pages that follow we include personal reflections offered by some of the other members.

A SAMPLE OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

Submitted by Lloyd Elm, Ph.D.

Historically the indigenous people of this great country have been portrayed in such a manner that, at best, they are generally perceived as being culturally marginal. It would appear that the European desire to bring the Native societies into "civilization," whether they needed to be or not, overrode the recognition of the levels of civilization that already existed when Europeans first visited the North American continent.

The purpose of this brief is to focus on one element of our multicultural society so as to enhance the main body of the Committee's report and recommendations. As we call attention to several Native American historical perspectives, we need to perceive them as being part of the new paradigm. However, one must note that the subsequent brief descriptions of Native American perspectives are not all-inclusive; they simply introduce us to the flavor of a larger body of knowledge.

Now, take a moment, and in your mind's eye, develop your image of how you perceive Native Americans in both a historical and contemporary perspective. Hold your image as you read the following:

Indigenous Diversity

When Europeans first visited the North American continent, the human diversity already in existence was comparable to that of any other continent on our planet. Clearly, there were at least 300 distinct cultural/linguistic groups comfortably operating at the time of "discovery." (Some Europeans enjoy feeling that they discovered America.) The indigenous societies were, and still are, as distinctively different from each other as European Germans are from European Spaniards.

It is ludicrous to think that all indigenous people were, or are, the same. It should be clear that when Native Americans initially came into contact with Europeans, a very diverse set of perceptions was generated. From the body of knowledge known as traditional oral history found within Native societies, it is well established that Native people were as amused by European behavior as Europeans were by Native behavior.

Levels of Civilization

Within the diverse indigenous societies that Europeans first interfaced with, there existed levels of social and political development that matched those of any other continent. If civilization indeed means "a relatively high level of cultural and technological development and the refinement of thought," then at the time of initial European intrusion, indigenous societies were enjoying commensurate levels of civilization.

At least one character of indigenous civilization that may be divergent from European civilization resides in the relationship that most Native societies traditionally practice with the earth. The relationship has repeatedly been described as one that is "sacred."

While European technology has greatly contributed to the survival of our species on this planet, the opposite is also true. As one Native scholar once noted, "It is doubtful that indigenous technology would have ever considered making the Cuyahoga River flammable."

Maybe the new paradigm will consider redefining the concept of civilization.

A Unique Relationship

The framers of the Constitution of the United States found reason to expressly mention "American Indians" twice in the original document, which is something that no other group of American citizens can cite. It would appear that this fact is the basis for the unique relationship that "American Indians" have with the Federal government.

A careful review of the historical literature reveals that the formal policy of the Federal government was to make peace with "American Indians" while purchasing their lands, and to bring them into Anglo civilization. As the relationship developed, the term "trust" eventually became one of the terms used to describe it.

The general definition of the Trust Relationship derives directly from the purpose of the trust relationship and how it has been interpreted most favorably for "American Indians." The definition is:

The United States trust responsibility toward American Indians is the unique legal and moral duty of United States to assist "Indians" in the protection of their property and rights.

In 1942, the Supreme Court expressly applied the term "Fiduciary," and all of its meanings, to the duty that the United States has to the indigenous people of our country.

This perspective is one that very few people understand, or care to implement fully.

The Education of Native Americans

In 1969, a comprehensive national assessment on Native American Education was completed. The title of the report, "Indian Education: A National Tragedy - A National Challenge," summarized with accuracy how effective the American School had been in educating our Native population.

From the Native perspective, in general, the education process has been perceived as an instrument of cultural genocide. The education of Native children was consciously and carefully designed to gradually dissolve all aspects of Native ethnicity. In part, the process has been successful from that aspect.

In 1975, the Regents of The University of the State of New York, in response to Native American activity, came forward with a statement of policy relative to Native American Education. The foreword of the position paper emphasizes the essence of the spirit that captured the Social Studies Review Committee.

It is as follows (emphasis added):

> New York State has been committed since 1846 to providing educational services for Native Americans residing on the State reservations and tribal lands. In the main, these services sought to enable Native Americans to move into the mainstream of American society. EVEN WITH THE STRONG SUPPORT OF THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, IT IS EVIDENT THAT SUCCESS HAS BEEN LIMITED.
>
> THE BOARD OF REGENTS RECOGNIZES THAT NATIVE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN NEW YORK WISH TO RETAIN THEIR TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND LIFE-STYLES AND TO BLEND THESE INTO THE WHOLE OF AMERICAN SOCIETY. Therefore, educational programs must be designed to meet the diverse and special needs of the various tribal individuals and groups comprising Native Americans of New York State.
>
> This position paper presents a guide for policy whereby educational opportunities can be improved for present and future generations of Native Americans in New York State.

Conclusions

TODAY, NEW THOUGHTS ARE THRIVING IN THE MINDS OF PROFESSIONAL NATIVE EDUCATORS:

1. A COMPLETE EDUCATION, WHATEVER THAT MEANS TO INDIVIDUALS, NO LONGER MEANS THAT INDIVIDUALS MUST SACRIFICE THEIR ETHNIC IDENTITY.
2. A COMPLETE EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL ELEMENTS CRITICAL TO OUR SURVIVAL AS A CULTURALLY IDENTIFIABLE GROUP.
3. WE CANNOT EXPECT THE FEDERAL OR STATE GOVERNMENTS TO DELIVER TO US THE GUIDES TO EFFECTIVE EDUCATION. WE MUST GENERATE AND COLLABORATIVELY DELIVER THEM OURSELVES.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

By Nathan Glazer
4 June 1991

This report is not a document that stands by itself, without interpretation. Different members of the committee, as well as different elements of the public, will read it differently, and selectively. Probably no member of the committee accepts every part and point in the report with equal commitment, and we differ in the way we see dangers in how the report will be read, and how we would like the broad direction it sets for the development of social studies in New York State developed in detail.

The report does reject two extremes in the treatment of ethnic and racial diversity in American social studies: One is the emphasis on forceful Americanization and assimilation that characterized much of American public education during the period of the great European immigration and for some time after. The other is the parceling out of American history into a different and incompatible story for each group, generally told by a few activists and militants speaking for the group, a vision which seemed to be advocated in an earlier report. The first danger is scarcely a present one: The kind of history which gave an exclusive role as the carrier of American civilization to immigrants from England and their descendants, and the kind of educational practice in which children might be fined for speaking a foreign language, are dead and gone. The second danger is more alive, but the report steers clear of it. It does tell us there are many perspectives from which the story of the American people and the key episodes within that story can be told, and that commonly agreed-on accounts have changed and will change over the years, with both new findings, and, in truth, findings activated by the interests and concerns of new groups in the American population. It accepts the role of the social studies as a socializing and nation-building force, while it applauds an evolving society in which all people of whatever race and ethnic background now find a place. This was not always so, but it is so today.

Within the broad spectrum that remains after the extremes have been rejected, the report points out a very general direction, rather than specifies the details of a syllabus or curriculum. It continues a debate, rather than concludes it.

Even within the bounds of this broad arena of development and debate, there is one major danger I see against which we must be alert, one to which the report offers some support. This is the danger of the hypostatization of race, ethnic group, culture, people. (To hypostatize: "to make into, or regard as, a separate and distinct substance; . . . to assume a reality.") The various ethnic groups, races, sub-cultures, the components of what we like to call with some exaggeration "the peoples of America," are not composed of a "distinct and separate substance." The groups we refer to when we speak of "multiculturism" are not monolithic and unchanging realities. Each is made up of different classes with different interests, each has been marked by differences created by the time of arrival of different waves under different circumstances, each has undergone various degrees of assimilation, acculturation, intermarriage, and each carries different attitudes to its past: European immigrants overwhelmingly see their assimilation to the United States, under the system of public education they experienced, as a good thing, even if their specific culture and language at the time played no role in the curriculum. Many of us recognize no identity other than American. When we speak of "multiculturism," we should be aware there are no fully distinct cultures in the United States, aside from American culture. We should not make of something labile, changeable, flexible and variable — the cultures people bring with them to the United States or develop as variants of our common American culture — something hard and definite and unchanging,

something that establishes itself as a distinct and permanent element in American society and polity. That is not the way our society works, or should work.

A conception of American multiculturalism that is true to its complex reality does not lend itself easily to teaching to children and adolescents: They want something more definite, the teachers want something more definite and specific to give them, the tests want something more definite on which to test them, and so we fall into teaching a false but easily transmissible picture of American society. And since people are shaped to some extent by their education, we fall into the danger, by presenting a conception of separate and different groups fixed through time as distinct elements in our society, of making our future one which conforms to our teaching, of arresting the processes of change and adaptation that have created a common society, a single nation.

At one time, to teach children about the variability of human culture, we taught them about the Eskimo, adapted to the treeless Arctic, and the pygmy, adapted to the deep tropical jungle. The triumph of these peoples over their environment was truly admirable. But they were also the most isolated and distinct cultures on the face of the earth. Let us not turn our teaching about the peoples of America, who have received every possible cultural influence, and have changed in ways that make them unrecognizable to the relatives who stayed behind, into a story of Eskimos and pygmies. That is not the reality of American society.

THE NEED TO EXAMINE THE ORIGIN OF RACISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SKIN-COLOR DEVALUATION

Submitted by Diane Glover

Winthrop Jordan states in a chapter entitled "First Impressions — Initial English Confrontation with Africans" that England's concept of blackness was loaded with intense meaning. "Long before they found that some men were Black, Englishmen found in the idea of blackness, a way to express some of their most ingrained values. Black was an emotional partisan color, the handmaid and symbol of baseness and evil, a sign of danger and repulsion. White and black connoted purity and filthiness, beauty and ugliness, God and the devil. The Negro was ugly by reason of his color and his "horrid Curles" and "disfigured lips and noses."[1]

Added also were the notions that Africans had a defective religion (heathenism), savage behavior, likened to beasts (particularly the ape) and had libidinous men. The complexion of Africans in the 1550s posed problems about its nature, especially its permanence and utility, its cause and origin, and its significance.[2]

Anderson and Cromwell (1977) reported that White Americans have devalued black skin color. They indicated that blackness has been associated with discouragement, despair, depression, coldness, evilness, nightmares, etc. This negative black concept, they believed, fused with skin color devaluation. Thus the American Black, as well as other Blacks of the African Diaspora, had resigned himself/herself to the fact that he/she was negative, inferior, and less attractive. The study also noted that the social result from accepting negative blackness was devastating. Besides the acceptance of the White ideal and negative blackness, American Blacks have utilized skin color to discriminate among themselves.[3]

Reaves and Friedman (1982) reported that a number of studies in the past demonstrated that standards of physical attractiveness for Blacks were derived from White perceptions of physical beauty.[4]

Williams-Burns's (1980) study also pointed out that an underlying assumption in most investigations appeared to be that low self-esteem was related to skin color.[7]

Fish and Larr (1972) stated that racism has had and continues to have a staggeringly massive and pervasive negative force in the childhood development of Black children; the social layer of identification did not occur as a secondary, superimposed one, but was a major negative influencing factor in their basic identity from the first. Children feel about themselves as they have experienced others feeling toward them. The others include not only members of their family but society and its effect through their parents, who taught them their roles from the beginning.6

Several studies have indicated that children become aware of skin color at the age of two and one-half years. Gordon Allport's *Nature of Prejudice* stated that Negro children are by and large "racially aware" earlier than are White children. They tend to be confused, disturbed, and sometimes excited by the problem. Negro children ask more diverse questions about racial differences, fondle the blond hair of a White child, and are often rejective toward Negro dolls.[7]

In 1991, much of what has just been cited still permeates our overall society, and continues to plague communities of the African Diaspora. Skin color devaluation has not disappeared. The topic of racism can no longer be a taboo, if we want an effective multicultural curriculum. The educational community (Giant Step, Head Start, Day Care, community and cultural institutions, colleges and universities, libraries, parents, and

public school personnel) need informational and training sessions that address racism and its relationship to skin color devaluation. The educational community needs to know the devastating psychological damage that has been inflicted upon members of the African Diaspora. They need to know society's role in the debasement of physical characteristics of people of African ancestry (their noses, lips, hair, etc.). They need to know the role of European scholarship in promoting psychological and historical inferiority. They need to know or try to understand how racism has impacted on children of African descent and its relationship to self-concept, economic and sociological variables.

In closing, the African Proverb, "An ignorant man/woman is always a slave," best describes how effective this training would be.

Notes

[1] Winthrop Jordan, *The White Man's Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the United States*. Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 6.

[2] Jordan, pp. 7-16.

[3] C. Anderson and R. Cromwell, "'Black Is Beautiful' and the Color Preferences of Afro-American Youth," *Journal of Negro Education*, 1977, 46, 76-88.

[4] J. Reaves and P. Friedman, "The Relationship of Physical Attractiveness and Similarity of Preferences to Peer Affiliation among Black Children," *Journal of Negro Education*, 1982, 51, 101-110.

[5] W. Williams-Burns, "Self-Esteem and Skin Color Perception of Advantaged Afro-American Children," *Journal of Negro Education*, 1980, 49, 385-397.

[6] J. Fish and C. Larr, "A Decade of Change in Drawings by Black Children," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 1972, 129, 421-426.

[7] Gordon W. Allport, The Nature of Prejudice. Anchor Books, 1958, p. 288.

A DISSENTING COMMENT

Kenneth T. Jackson
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The purpose of this Committee is a good one. Certainly, we should celebrate the cultural diversity which has made the United States almost unique among the world's nations. Certainly, we should acknowledge that heterogeneity has made this land rich and creative. Certainly, we should give our students a varied and challenging multicultural education.

Just as certainly, we should celebrate the common culture that Americans share. Unfortunately, our report seems to disparage "Anglo" conformity. Leaving aside the debatable question of whether or not we in fact have conformity (from Broadway in New York to Broadway in Los Angeles we can easily find more diversity than exists anywhere else on earth) or whether earlier immigrant groups were "required" to "shed their specific cultural differences in order to be considered Americans," I would argue that it is politically and intellectually unwise for us to attack the traditions, customs, and values which attracted immigrants to these shores in the first place. The people of the United States will recognize, even if this committee does not, that every viable nation has to have a common culture to survive in peace. As our own document indicates, one need look no further than Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, or Canada to see the accuracy of this proposition. We might want to add India after the events of the past two weeks. The dominant American culture might have been German or French or Chinese or Algonquin or African, but for various historical reasons the English language and British political and legal traditions prevailed. Whether or not we would have been better off if Montcalm had defeated Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham is beside the point.

It is poor strategy, poor history, and poor logic for our committee to bemoan the "Anglo" culture that supposedly emerged. After all, does anyone expect that there is more tolerance for multiculturism in Tokyo, Caracas, Istanbul, Copenhagen, Mexico City, or Beijing than there is in New York or Los Angeles? Of course not. In France, for example, the citizenry has even agreed on a common time to vacation, eat, and sleep. There is scarcely a 24-hour restaurant, grocery store, or gasoline station in Paris, and there is even an "academy" to pass judgment on which words are acceptable and which signs can be placed in windows.

A better strategy for this committee would have been to argue in a positive rather than a negative way. Because we are made up of many peoples and cultures, because all these peoples and cultures have contributed to national greatness, and because the United States has typically done a better job of integrating newcomers into its social and political fabric (with racial prejudice being a glaring and persistent exception) than other places, its educational system should reflect that experience. We have been multicultural, we are multicultural, and we hope that we will always be multicultural. Moreover, the enemies of multiculturism are not teachers, textbooks, or curricular guides, but shopping centers, fast food outlets, and situation comedies, all of which threaten to turn us into an amorphous mass.

The report highlights the notion that all cultures are created equal. This may be true in the abstract, and I have no problem with the philosophical concept. But I cannot endorse a "Declaration of Cultural Interdependence," which is the subtitle of our Committee report. Within any single country, one culture must be accepted as the standard. Unfortunately, our document has virtually nothing to say about the things which hold us together. As Professor Schlesinger notes in his comment, the emphasis is too much on the *pluribus* and not enough on the *unum*.

Finally, I should like to emphasize that history and geography should be the core of the social studies. Three full years — one each of world history, European history, and American history — should be required for high school graduation. Moreover, the State of New York should require social studies teachers to study history and geography themselves. Unfortunately, New York State does not currently require social studies teachers to study any history or any geography at any time.

MULTICULTURALISM AND COMPARATIVE HOLOCAUST: EDUCATIONAL AND MORAL IMPLICATIONS

by Ali A. Mazrui
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May 1991

A country treats its cultural "minorities" either as full citizens or as the equivalent of a conquered people. There is almost no middle ground. The Kurds in Iraq (and elsewhere) have long been treated as the equivalent of a conquered people. Native Americans have also been so treated in the United States and, in the past, were subjected to comparable forms of genocide as the Kurds have been in Iraq. African-Americans are a *captured* people rather than a conquered people — since they were forcibly exported from their homes in Africa. However, for our purposes African-Americans are the *equivalent* of a conquered people — at least until such time as they successfully win their full *economic, cultural,* as well as *political* rights as citizens of the United States.

By the Nurnberg Laws of 1935 Hitler stripped Jews of their citizenship totally — demoting them from German nationality to the equivalent of a conquered people. He soon attempted to reduce them to *non-people* altogether. The *Kristallnacht* pogrom, the Night of Broken Glass, unleashed the destruction of every synagogue in Germany, and almost every other Jewish institution. It was not long before the Jewish people themselves were in the process of being callously and cynically destroyed.

Since World War II the term "holocaust" — originally Greek and denoting wholesale destruction by fire — has tended to refer exclusively to this horrendous 12-year experience of the Jews under Nazi intolerance (1933-1945). There is no quarrel about reserving the Hebrew word *Sho'ah* or *Hurban* exclusively to the martyrdom of the Jews under the Nazis. When speaking the English language we may even adopt into English either *Sho'ah* or *Hurban* and reserve that anglicized Hebrew concept exclusively for Nazi genocidal atrocities.

But the Greek-derived word "holocaust" itself should remain a *generic* metaphor and be applicable to the experience of other people, under atrocities perpetrated by other systems, as well as to the atrocities of the Nazis. The Greek-derived word "holocaust" need not be *Judeo-centric* — reserved exclusively for the Jewish experience. American children need to know that genocide was part of the birth of *this* nation. The holocaust began at home — "Lest we forget!"

The making and building of the Americas included victims and martyrs — as well as conquerors and masters. The religious martyr suffered victimization because of *beliefs*. The racial martyr suffered victimization because of his or her *identity*. Christians in ancient Rome before the conversion of Constantine I were true *belief-martyrs*. Enslaved Africans more recently, on the other hand, were *identity-martyrs*. So were Native Americans slaughtered for racial reasons by early European settlers.

The Jews in Hitler's Germany were a combination of the two — since Jews were both a religious community (belief-martyrs) and a descent group of presumed shared ancestry (identity-martyrs).

The Jews in the Bible were among the earliest victims of enslavement. (Moses said, "Let my people go." So did Albert Luthuli, Africa's first Nobel Laureate, several millennia later.) The Jews, among the earliest slaves, were also among the latest 20th-century victims of genocide.

We define "holocaust" in this generic sense as the wholesale destruction of a people either through mass murder and genocide or through mass enslavement and chattelization. In this Western hemisphere, the main victims of the holocaust of *genocide* have been the Native Americans. The main victims of the holocaust of *enslavement* have been African-Americans. In both cases the numbers of human beings victimized have been far larger than the six million Jews who perished under the Nazis. On the other hand, the destruction of the Jews was rapid, concentrated and often more cynically purposeful than almost any previous case of genocide in history.

The most extreme forms of collective martyrdom in history have indeed been genocide, the annihilation of a group, and enslavement, collective servitude. Genocide is physical brutalization and extermination. Enslavement is bondage, servitude, exploitation, and often the reduction of human beings to chattel. Genocide is a declaration that a group is physically dispensable. Enslavement is a declaration that a group is usable and has commodity utility. Native Americans, as the greatest victims of genocide in the Americas, have been the most *brutalized* of the peoples in the Western hemisphere. African-Americans — as victims of enslavement and racial discrimination — have been the most *humiliated*. The holocaust of genocide is therefore the holocaust of extreme physical sadism. The holocaust of enslavement is the holocaust of extreme psychological sadism.

Those who are denied self-esteem may eventually become self-destructive. For Native Americans part of the self-destructiveness took the form of alcoholism, at least for a while. For African-Americans part of the self-destructiveness has become drug abuse. The holocaust of genocide against Native Americans has continued in the form of conditions which promote masochism, despair and alcohol abuse. The holocaust of enslavement against African-Americans has been transformed into conditions which engender rage, violence, poverty, crime and drug abuse. For Native Americans and African-Americans there has been no newly created "State of Israel" to compensate for the indignities and cruelties of the previous holocaust. The holocausts of the Native Americans and Africans have continued to inflict additional pain on their victims, on their martyrs of identity. The jails, mortuaries and police-cells still bear testimony to the disproportionate suffering of victims of American holocausts. The anguish persists.

Perhaps this will never cease until cultural "minorities" in the United States are no longer treated as the equivalent of conquered peoples — and acquire at last full *cultural* rights, as well as political equality and economic opportunities. Part of the answer may lie in a comparison of the United States with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union includes culturally distinct Republics which consist of more clearly conquered peoples; the United States has "minorities" which are in a disguised comparable status. The Soviet Union claimed that all the 15 Republics were free members of a voluntary union; the United States pretended that all citizens were "equal before the law" in a democracy. Reality has caught up with both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

The United States and the Soviet Union are caught up in two interrelated domestic crises. The Soviet Union's crisis ranges from economic collapse to ethnic separatism. Since Mikhail Gorbachev, the answer to the Soviet crisis is deemed to be *perestroika*, or societal re-structuring. The wider freedoms are *glasnost*.

The long-term crisis of the United States, on the other hand, may ultimately be concerned with how the *young* are brought up and educated. What needs to be re-structured is not necessarily the economy or the American Constitution. It is the context within which children are reared and educated. To coin a word, what North America needs is *paedo-stroika*,[1] a transformation of the universe of the *young*. The freedoms of the classroom are *class-nost*.

Obviously such a transformation needs changes in traditions of child-rearing, in patterns of children's exposure to television and in a variety of other factors. But *paedo-stroika* also needs a major transformation in *education*. Our concern in this presentation is with the *educational* implications of *paedo-stroika*.

National development for a country like the United States (and indeed the Soviet Union) requires a capacity for different segments of the society to take comparable pride in membership of that society. Alienation of minorities is, by definition, anti-developmental. Victims of previous holocausts need a respite.

While Soviet education has been overwhelmingly *Russo-centric*, American education has been disproportionately *Anglo-centric*. The alienation of Soviet minorities has now resulted in widespread ethnic separatism and secessionism. The alienation of American minorities has resulted in a large underclass, in urban crime, in drug abuse and in an ethnically unbalanced spread of AIDS. Half of the women infected with AIDS in the United States are reportedly Black.[2]

The educational system cannot hope to deal with the devastating *consequences* of alienation. But educators can try to deal with some of the *causes* of alienation. Among these causes must be counted a national culture which denies minorities enough self-worth and enough sense of cultural dignity. The educational systems of both the United States and the Soviet Union have done precisely that kind of harm.

In Soviet schools history was made in the image of Russia. Lenin (a Russian) was the supreme hero of the twentieth century. Marx (a European) needed Russians to translate him into genuine revolutionary practice. Even Ukrainians were on the periphery of history, let alone the Uzbeks.

In American schools, history was made in the image of the "Anglo-Saxons." George Washington (an "Anglo-Saxon") was the supreme hero of the American war of independence. And who were the founding fathers? Washington's fellow "Anglo-Saxons" like Jefferson and Madison. History was made by the leisure class — not by those who made leisure-time possible (workers, women and slaves).

The United States today is already the most impressive microcosm of global ethnic and racial diversity in human history. But although the national origins of the population are so diverse, the dominant culture of the United States has been narrowly *Eurocentric* and often *Anglocentric*. How is this Eurocentrism manifested in the educational system of the country? What form does the Eurocentrism take in the syllabus and the curriculum of American schools?

It is arguable that since Europe has played such a disproportionate role in modern technological, diplomatic and ideological history, it is "inevitable" that the study of modern times should be so disconcertingly Euro-focused. Is the study of the history of the world inevitably prone to such racial and cultural biases? Or does the pursuit and portrayal of the truth require a more balanced "curriculum of inclusion"?

A far bigger question which now arises is how this country, how this greatest microcosm of the human race on earth, can also become the greatest epitome of world culture in history. How can the United States succeed in capturing some of the rich cultural diversity of the nationalities represented in its population?

At the moment the dominant American culture is much closer to *Australian* culture than it is to Mexican, Brazilian, Arab, Chinese, African, or even Italian and French cultures. What makes American political culture recognizably similar to Australian — in spite of the vast distances between the two countries — is, in the final analysis, their shared "Anglo-Saxon" focus. American political culture is also similar to British, Canadian and New Zealand paradigms. That is the ultimate litmus test of the *Anglocentrism* of American culture so far. "Anglo-Saxon" countries bear a striking similarity.

And yet this country has been placed by history in the unique position of encapsulating within itself a substantial part of the cultural diversity of the world. The place to begin is the school. The agenda is multiculturalism.

The following questions have already concerned educational reformers in the United States, and now increasingly in the USSR.

Some general questions:

1. Have existing boundaries of knowledge been distorted by excessive attention to the exploits of the powerful?
2. Who makes history? Men? Elites? Whites? Others?
3. Who advances knowledge? Men? Elites? Whites? Others?
4. Who makes news? Men? Elites? Whites? Others?
5. Who teaches?
6. Who learns?
7. What is taught?
8. What needs to be taught?
9. Who decides?
10. What are the implications for the rest of the world?

Some particular questions:

(i) Are there persistent errors in American or Soviet education which need to be corrected?

(ii) Are there persistent gaps in American or Soviet education which need to be filled?

(iii) Does cultural bias in the curriculum affect how minorities perform?

(iv) What should the concept of diversity mean in education?

(v) Does the role of the United States or the USSR as a global power impose special responsibilities on educators as purveyors of culture? Is American or Soviet education "globalist" enough?

(vi) What are the implications for the rest of the world?

What is at stake in these questions is the universe of the young. The universe needs restructuring. It needs *paedo-stroika*. What is at stake is also a special kind of educational freedom. It could be called *class-nost*.

The twin shadows of collective martyrdom and comparative holocaust need to recede sooner rather than later. The shadows will certainly never disappear in the United States until the victims of previous genocide (natives) and previous enslavement (Africans) are accorded *cultural* rights in the educational system comparable in importance to *political* rights electorally and *economic* rights in the means of production. *Multiculturalism in education may turn out to be as fundamental a right as a job in the economy or a vote in the political system.* Only when jobs, political participation and multicultural education are adequately and equally accessible to all citizens will the United States cease to have pockets of "conquered people" in its midst.

Notes

[1] Originally Greek for "boy" or "child," the English prefix "*paedo-*" is defined by the Oxford Concise Dictionary as "child" — illustrating with the concept of "paedo-baptism," meaning "infant baptism." Nasty words derived from it include "paederast" and "paedophilia." Friendly words include "paediatric."

[2] I am indebted to the research under way by David McBride, a professor of the history of disease at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

Submitted as an annex to the Report of the New York State Social Studies Review and Development Committee, June 1991. This annex is indebted for stimulation especially to Diane Glover, another member of the New York Review and Development Committee.

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL STUDIES SYLLABUS REVIEW COMMITTEE

A Dissenting Opinion

Arthur Schlesinger, jr.
28 May 1991

I agree with many of the practical recommendations in the report. It is unquestionably necessary to diversify the syllabus in order to meet the needs of a more diversified society. It is unquestionably necessary to provide for global education in an increasingly interdependent world. Our students should by all means be better acquainted with women's history, with the history of ethnic and racial minorities, with Latin American, Asian and African history. Debate, alternative interpretations, "multiple perspectives" are all essential to the educational enterprise. I welcome changes that would adapt the curriculum to these purposes. If that is what the report means by multicultural education, I am all for it.

But I fear that the report implies much more than this. The underlying philosophy of the report, as I read it, is that ethnicity is the defining experience for most Americans, that ethnic ties are permanent and indelible, that the division into ethnic groups establishes the basic structure of American society and that a main objective of public education should be the protection, strengthening, celebration and perpetuation of ethnic origins and identities. Implicit in the report is the classification of all Americans according to ethnic and racial criteria.

These propositions are assumed rather than argued in the report. They constitute an ethnic interpretation of American history that, like the economic interpretation, is valid up to a point but misleading and wrong when presented as the whole picture.

The ethnic interpretation, moreover, reverses the historic theory of America — which has been, not the preservation and sanctification of old cultures and identities, but the creation of a *new* national culture and a *new* national identity. As Secretary of State John Quincy Adams told a German contemplating migration to these shores, those who would settle in America must recognize one necessity: "They must cast off the European skin, never to resume it. They must look forward to their posterity rather than backward to their ancestors."

Of course students should learn more about the rich variety of peoples and cultures that have forged this new American identity. They also should understand the curse of racism — the great failure of the American experiment, the glaring contradiction of American ideals and the still-crippling disease of American society. But we should also be alert to the danger of a society divided into distinct and immutable ethnic and racial groups, each taught to cherish its own apartness from the rest.

While I favor curricular changes that make for more inclusive interpretations of past and present, I do not believe that we should magnify ethnic and racial themes at the expense of the unifying ideals that precariously hold our highly differentiated society together. The republic has survived and grown because it has maintained a balance between *pluribus* and *unum*. The report, it seems to me, is saturated with *pluribus* and neglectful of *unum*.

The first paragraph of the preamble notes that "no other country in the world is peopled by a greater variety of races, nationalities, and ethnic groups." It continues: "But although the United States has been a great asylum for diverse peoples, it has not always been a great refuge for diverse cultures." Both points are correct — but the report is oblivious to the historical fact that the second sentence explains the first.

Why has the United States been thus far exempt from the "trends toward separation and dissolution" that, as the report later notes, are having such destructive effects in the Soviet Union, South Africa, Canada, Yugoslavia, Spain and the United Kingdom? The report replies with general statements about diversity as a source of strength. But diversity has not been a source of strength in the Soviet Union, South Africa, Canada, etc. Why has it been a source of strength in the United States?

Obviously the reason why the United States, for all its manifest failure to live up to its own ideals, is still the most successful large multi-ethnic nation is precisely because, instead of emphasizing and perpetuating ethnic separatism, it has assimilated immigrant cultures into a new *American* culture.

Most immigrants indeed came to America precisely in order to escape their pasts. They *wanted* to become Americans and to participate in the making of an American culture and an American national identity. Even black Americans, who came as involuntary immigrants and have suffered — still suffer — awful persecution and discrimination, have made vital contributions to the American culture in which they have grown up and of which they are an indispensable part.

The preamble rejects "previous ideals of assimilation to an Anglo-American model." Of course America derives its language and its primary political purposes and institutions from Great Britain. To pretend otherwise is to falsify history. To teach otherwise is to mislead our students. But the British legacy has been modified, enriched and reconstituted by the absorption of non-Anglo cultures and traditions as well as by the distinctive experiences of American life. That is why America today is so very different a nation from Britain. Assimilation does not equal Angloconformity.

But the report goes on to reject the very ideal of assimilation. I recognize that assimilation' is a word that many now find upsetting. Even `integration' seems to be out of fashion. The report does on occasion refer in general terms to the need for *unum* as well as for *pluribus*. The preamble observes, "Special attention will need to be given to those values, characteristics, and traditions which we share in common." I do not, however, find this concern much reflected in the body of the report or in the proposals for syllabus revision. Part II begins by describing "the search for common cultural grounds" as "more important than ever." This comment, if true, should give that search a much higher priority than it receives in the report. Buried toward the end is a comment on the importance of examining with care "what the elements are that hold together a nation or culture in spite of what are often great differences. This surely is one of the central questions to be considered in any course in American history." It surely is, but it is a central question that receives practically no attention in the proposals for curricular revision.

A basic question is involved: should public education seek to make our young boys and girls contributors to a common American culture? or should it strengthen and perpetuate separate ethnic and racial subcultures? The report places its emphasis on cultivating and reinforcing ethnic differences. Students, the report says, should be "continually" encouraged to ask themselves what their cultural heritage is, why they should be proud of it, "why should I develop an understanding of and respect for my own culture(s), language(s), religion, and national origin(s)." Would it not be more appropriate for students to be "continually" encouraged to understand the American culture in which they are growing up and to prepare for an active role in shaping that culture?

Am I wrong in sensing a certain artificiality and inauthenticity in all this? If the ethnic subcultures had genuine vitality, they would be sufficiently instilled in children by family, church and community. It is surely not the office of the public school to promote ethnic separatism and heighten ethnic tensions.

Should public education move in this direction, it will only increase the fragmentation, resegregation and self-ghettoization of American life. The bonds of national cohesion in the republic are sufficiently fragile already. Public education should aim to strengthen those bonds, not to weaken them. Of course Americans should be free (as they have always been, and have often done) to cultivate ancestral customs and tradi-

tions. But the function of the schools is surely to teach what holds Americans together as well as to teach what sets them apart. The alternative to integration is disintegration.

What has held Americans together in the absence of a common ethnic origin has been the creation of a new American identity — a distinctive American culture based on a common language and common adherence to ideals of democracy and human rights, a culture to which many nationalities and races have made emphatic contributions in the past and will (one hopes) make emphatic contributions in the future. Our democratic ideals have been imperfectly realized, but the long labor to achieve them and to move the American experiment from exclusion to participation has been a central theme of American history. It should be a central theme of the New York social studies curriculum.

And it is important for students to understand where these democratic ideals come from. They come of course from Europe. Indeed, Europe is the *unique* source of these ideals — ideals that today empower people in every continent and to which today most of the world aspires. That is why it is so essential (in my view) to acquaint students with the western history and tradition that created our democratic ideals — and why it is so wrong to tell students of non-European origin that western ideals are not for them.

I regret the note of Europhobia that sometimes emerges in vulgar attacks on "Eurocentric" curriculums. Certainly Europe, like every other culture, has committed its share of crimes. But, unlike most cultures, it has also generated ideals that have opposed and exposed those crimes.

The report, however, plays up the crimes and plays down the ideals. Thus, when it talks about the European colonization of Africa and India, it deplores "the eradication of many varieties of traditional culture and knowledge." Like infanticide? slavery? polygamy? subjection of women? suttee? veil-wearing? foot-binding? clitorectemies? Nothing is said about the influence of European ideas of democracy, human rights, self-government, rule of law.

Even Karl Marx was fairer to European colonization than that. "England," Marx said, "has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating — the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia . . . . The question is, can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about the revolution."

I also am doubtful about the note occasionally sounded in the report that "students must be taught social criticism" and "see themselves as active makers and changers of culture and society" and "promote economic fairness and social justice" and "bring about change in their communities, the nation, and the world." I very much hope that, as citizens, students will do all these things, but I do not think it is the function of the schools to teach students to become reformers any more than I ever thought it the function of the schools to teach them the beauty of private enterprise and the sanctity of the status quo. I will be satisfied if we can teach children to read, write and calculate. If students understand the nature of our western democratic tradition, they will move into social criticism on their own. But let us not politicize the curriculum on behalf either of the left or of the right.

I recognize that I am very much in the minority in these comments. But given basic philosophical disagreements with the report, I cannot conscientiously go along with my colleagues. I respect their serious concern and their devoted labor, and I have enjoyed my association with them. I would only beg them to consider what kind of nation we will have if we press further down the road to cultural separatism and ethnic fragmentation, if we institutionalize the classification of our citizens by ethnic and racial criteria and if we abandon our historic commitment to an American identity. What will hold our people together then?

Arthur Schlesinger, jr.

REFLECTIONS

Elleni Tedla

While being supportive of the attached report of the New York State Social Studies Review and Development Committee, I believe that additional examples and reflections on the social studies syllabus will enhance the report. I will, therefore, attempt to share some of my thoughts concerning the global studies syllabus (grades 9 and 10), using Africa as a specific example. Africa is the first continent to be covered in the global studies syllabus and is also very poorly presented. Although I may focus on Africa, I would use the same arguments for similar cases in other continents and countries.

Sole Use of Western Concepts and Standards

On the whole, the K-12 social studies syllabus is written from a single perspective. Although the global studies section (9th and 10th grades) attempts to deal with Africa, Asia and Latin America, indigenous peoples' perspectives are ignored as if they do not exist. Pre-European forms of indigenous self-governance, economic life, technology, education and religion are not recognized. They are simply omitted. There is little or no acknowledgment of the vast contribution of Africa, Asia and the Americas to the development of Europe and the United States.

The impact of European conquest on the four continents, the decimation of numerous native peoples of the Americas and the holocaust and enslavement of Africans are ignored. The dehumanizing impact of such violence on the conqueror/oppressor as well as on the conquered/oppressed is left out. Furthermore, the supposed benefits of colonization to indigenous people and their lands are told from the point of view of the colonizers and their descendants.

Because Western values and concepts have been used as the measuring stick for recognition, indigenous thoughts and ways of life are simply discounted. Countries and peoples who do not fit the Western model of development and modernization are labeled as Third World, underdeveloped or developing. The ideal model to be followed is that of the West. There is no positive coverage (in the syllabus) of indigenous ways of life that maintain or build on their own political, economic, educational and religious traditions. This insistence on understanding the world from a single perspective alone relegates the vast majority of the world to a state of worthlessness and voicelessness.

Omissions, Simplification, Unidirectional Influence

In the following discussion, I will deal with some of the problems that one encounters when one attempts to learn about Africa. The section on Africa is replete with negative images, omissions, simplifications and stereotypes. Africa is portrayed as a victim and a continent which non-Africans act upon and influence. It is seldom presented as a continent of creativity and inventions capable of influencing peoples from other continents who come in contact with it.

Pre-European and pre-Arab African ways of life, trades and travels are left out. The unique and positive aspects of Africa — in terms of the diversity and unity of cultures; the fauna and flora; minerals, metals, precious stones; the site where the oldest human bones, dated 3.5 million years, have been found (Johanson & Edey, 1981) — are not included.

The pre-European Arab raids of Africa for slaves and the destruction of African culture and ways of life that resulted from the raids are not covered. The enslaved Africans that were taken to the "Middle East" and other parts of Asia did not simply disappear any more than did African-Americans in the United States. Yet, there is no mention of them.

Indigenous African Religion: The treatment of indigenous African religion is marked by omission and simplification. Its resilience and contributions, as well as its influence on Islam and Christianity in Africa (Mbiti, 1990), are not mentioned. There is no appreciation for the significance of traditional African religion as a powerful cultural force that not only survived Islamic and Christian onslaught, but has also revived in the religious expressions of the African diaspora in the Americas.

Christianity: The fact that Christianity entered Africa at a very early stage before it entered Europe is not noted. Alexandria in Egypt and Carthage in Libya were the centers of Christian learning. They were known for their teachings of philosophy and theology. During the first five centuries of Christianity, Africa was a leader and a central player in the development, formulation of doctrine (Mariology), organization and structure of the Christian church (Frend, 1966). This means that African culture had great influence on Christianity before it was reintroduced into Africa by European missionaries and colonizers.

Islam: No mention is made of the fact that Africa played an important role in the early preservation of Islam (Ethiopia provided refuge to Islam when Muhammad's followers were being persecuted in Mecca). African culture has also had major impacts on the practice of Islam in Africa. The scholarly role played by Muslim Africans needs to be covered. For there were great centers of learning in Africa outside of Egypt — for example, Gene and Timbuktu in Mali.

Traditional African Art: Art is not separate from indigenous religion. In the syllabus, it has been taken out of context and treated as though religion revolves around it (Grades 9 and 10 syllabus, p. 41).

In the Grades 9 and 10 syllabus, pages 44-54 are replete with the great benefits that Africa supposedly reaped from being subjugated, exploited and forced into enslavement. These pages are excellent examples of the total disregard for indigenous lives, values, system of governance, education, economy, medicine, religion and technology. How well does this supposedly accrued benefit stand when compared to the millions of lives lost in the transportation of enslaved Africans to Europe and the Americas? How does one account for: (1) the losses of lives in the village raids for slaves, and (2) the destruction of a way of life and loss of technology and science due to the removal of the abled, strong men and women? All of these factors led to the great loss of African keepers of culture and knowledge. This is the holocaust that has not been mentioned in the syllabus, which only speaks about the benefits Africa gained from European domination. Here is a case in point:

> The colonial era led to economic development and relatively peaceful conditions that contributed to greater mobility and rapid urbanization. (p. 52)

The European colonial empire did not remain in power without continued resistance movements and struggles for freedom which in turn led to more losses of lives.

On the whole, Africa is treated as a passive recipient and victim. However, the influence and contribution of Africans and their descendants to Europe and the United States are incalculable if we think in terms of architecture, art, symbols, music, dance, raw materials, enslaved labor force, medicine, technology, manuscripts and artifacts housed in American and European museums and private collections, minerals, metals (precious metals and stones), animals for zoos, scientists, inventors, and countless inventions. Africa has been used as a resort place for Western tourists and animal poachers; as a study place for various Western scholars, anthropologists and archaeologists. Africa has

also been a job provider for Western missionaries, consultants, researchers and advisors who are eager to westernize Africa. The West has not ceased taking and receiving from Africa. Yet, the picture that is painted is one of a poverty- and disease-ridden continent that has little or nothing to offer to the world.

The removal of Egypt from Africa denies the continent recognition for some of its major contributions to the ancient world. Furthermore, North Africa belongs in Africa. It is not in the "Middle East." This type of cutting up of a continent and allocating the countries to another continent is done only to Africa. Such glaring prejudice and unfair treatment automatically robs Africa of some of its major accomplishments and places the credit elsewhere.

The need for a multicultural, multidisciplinary and multiperspective approach to understanding our complex and interdependent world cannot be overemphasized.

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PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY
AND COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12234

July 12, 1991

FOR ACTION

To: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

From: Thomas Sobol

Subject: Understanding Diversity

At your meeting on July 26 you will be called upon to decide a question which for the past two years has engaged the attention of many people throughout our State and nation. The question is, "To what extent, if any, should the children of New York State be taught a social studies curriculum which is more 'multicultural' than that now in existence?"

This question, so seemingly ordinary in its pedagogical jargon, entails many deeper questions: Who are we, as a people and a nation? What is the truth of our history? What are the realities of our present? What binds us together and makes us one? What differences among us are worth understanding and respecting? How can our differences and unity best be harmonized? To what extent should ethnic and cultural differences be used as one lens through which to study the American experience? For what kind of society, in what kind of world, do we have a responsibility to prepare our children?

These are heavy questions, questions which provoke disagreement among reasonable people, questions not easily laid to rest within the compass of a Regents meeting on a July evening. Why, then, are they before you? Some see the issue as "unnecessary" and "divisive." Why is it on your agenda?

In the narrow sense, the issue is before you because almost four years ago, partly in response to questions and criticisms by minority legislators and others --- questions and criticisms which had been addressed to the Board prior to my appointment as well as after it -- I appointed a Task Force on Minorities: Equity and Excellence, and asked it to review the syllabi published by the State Education Department. The Task Force's report,

entitled "A Curriculum of Inclusion," called for social studies teaching which included more of the experience of Black, Latino, Asian, Native American and other groups which constitute significant minorities in American society. To carry the work forward, last summer you authorized the appointment of a Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee, consisting of eminent teachers and scholars in the social science disciplines. The Committee's report, entitled "One Nation, Many Peoples," was submitted to you last month. It awaits a response.

In the larger sense, however, the issue is before you because it is before our society. The nature of our population is changing. We are becoming more diverse -- by the year 2000 one of every three New Yorkers will be what we call a "minority." Attitudes toward diversity are changing. New scholarship about non-European cultures competes with traditional studies for time in the nation's universities. Many for whom "social history" has become commonplace reject a view of history too narrowly focused on great leaders and political events. A shrinking world and a global economy compel attention to non-Western cultures. And throughout our State and country a rising generation of young men and young women, many of them of color, seek a better understanding of themselves and their place in American society -- an understanding that reconciles the distinctiveness of their origins with the commonality of our future.

These developments would have occurred whether or not a task force was formed in 1987. And it is the historic mission of this State -- the State of the Statue of Liberty, of Ellis Island, of perhaps the most ethnically and culturally diverse great city in history -- to lead the country by responding to these developments in ways consistent with the values of our democratic tradition.

ONE NATION, MANY PEOPLES

In February 1990, you directed staff to develop and submit for your review a plan for increasing all students' understanding of American history and culture, the history and culture of the diverse groups which comprise American society today, and the history and culture of other peoples throughout the world. The plan was to address such matters as a schedule for syllabus review and revision; a process for ensuring that informed people of diverse backgrounds are consulted; attention to the need for textbooks, software, and other instructional material relevant to a new curriculum; appropriate teacher training and participation in curriculum planning; a statewide awareness program involving boards of education, parents, and community organizations; and development of accountability measures. Above all, the plan was to ensure that any syllabus review and revision undertaken would be thoughtful, scholarly, and apolitical.

In April 1990, you approved such a plan, consisting of five phases:

Phase I	Establishing a Syllabus Review and Development Committee
Phase II	Conducting a Needs Assessment and Planning for the Accomplishment of Desirable Changes or Additions
Phase III	Developing Syllabi and Instructional Materials
Phase IV	Field Testing and Evaluation
Phase V	Professional Development and Implementation

The Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee was appointed in July 1990, initiating Phase I of this plan. It consisted of some 24 eminent scholars and teachers in the social sciences and history from academe and the schools, representing a variety of viewpoints and racial/ ethnic groups. Its charge was to examine the State syllabi and to recommend changes in them, and in the teaching of social studies, that would promote students' understanding of one another, our culture, and the world.

In June 1991 the Committee submitted its report, entitled "One Nation, Many Peoples: A Declaration of Cultural Interdependence." The report establishes an intellectual framework, criteria, and guidelines for implementation of its recommendations; and it outlines the work that, in the view of the Committee, remains to be done. The report provides a useful platform on which to mount the remaining effort. However, it does not by itself finish the job. As Professor Glazer has noted, "The report points out a very general direction, rather than specifies the details of a syllabus or curriculum." The recommendations which follow extract the essence of the report in a form which will enable the subsequent work to proceed within clear guidelines. The recommendations are arrayed under four headings: Reaffirm Regents Policy; Revise Social Studies Syllabi; Provide Support for Teaching and Learning the Social Studies; and Next Steps. A

concluding section -- "We, the People" -- affirms that understanding both our differences and what we have in common can strengthen the ties that unite us.

Reaffirm Regents Policy

For more than twenty years it has been the policy of the Board of Regents to promote the understanding of both our common democratic values and our multicultural origins, along with the development of a global perspective on our own and other societies. (Statements of Regents policy are shown as Appendix A.) Now a new urgency attaches, an urgency born of changes in our population, in attitudes toward diversity, and in changing political and economic circumstances throughout the world. Recommendations have been made which would shift Regents policy toward a more extreme position (e.g., exclusive Eurocentrism or Afrocentrism). Such shifts in policy would be unwise.

I recommend that you take the following action:

VOTED, That the Regents reaffirm their long-established policies concerning the study of American society and the world, as embodied in the documents cited in Appendix A.

Revise Social Studies Syllabi

Policy is one thing; implementation is another. Over the years the State Education Department and local school districts have done much to execute Regents policy in the schools. However, additional effort is needed. We turn first to the social studies syllabi published by the Education Department.

The Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee recognized the effort that was made in existing syllabi "to be comprehensive and to include subject matter about all parts of the world, about women, and about groups that have been minorities in the U.S. population." Nevertheless, the Committee found that these syllabi "require revision in order to portray the United States and the world in a balanced and accurate way and to prepare young people in New York State for productive participation in their society and world." The syllabi should be revised according to the following guidelines:

Establish Balanced Goals

Syllabi for the study of United States history and culture should seek to develop:

- understanding and appreciation of the democratic and moral values of our common American culture;
- understanding and appreciation of the history and culture of the various major ethnic and cultural groups which comprise American society;
- understanding of our society's unique strengths and its relationship to other societies in an increasingly interdependent world;
- students' capacity to think critically about societal issues, drawing on historical knowledge, contemporary information, and points of view from many sources.

Given these purposes, our nation's unity and its diversity are not opposites --- they are necessary complements. We are one people, and we must instill in all students deep respect for the core values and traditions of our society. But in order to understand ourselves and one another, we must learn about our differences as well. It is not only possible but necessary to have both more "pluribus" and more "unum."

Adopt Sound Principles

The Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee has recommended seven guiding principles for the social studies curriculum:

- Democracy: bridging the gap between reality and the ideal.
- Diversity: understanding and respecting others and oneself.
- Economic and social justice: understanding personal and social responsibility for economic and social systems, and for their effects.
- Globalism: Recognizing interdependence and world citizenship.
- Ecological balance: recognizing responsibility for the global neighborhood.
- Ethics and values: the pursuit of fairness and search for responsibility.
- The individual and society: seeing oneself as a participant in society.

These principles should serve as a guide in revising the syllabi. (The full text of the Committee's "guiding principles" appears as Appendix B.)

Emphasize Understanding

As it reviewed existing syllabi, the Social Studies Syllabus Committee found that "it is never possible to 'fit everything in.'" The information-dominant approach to the social

studies curriculum, the Committee believes, is doomed to failure. Rather, the Committee recommends that the emphasis be shifted "from the mastery of information to the development of fundamental tools, concepts, and intellectual processes." The emphasis is upon depth, not superficial breadth; upon the power of analytic thought, not memory alone.

This emphasis should be encouraged. The goal is to help students become readers and users of history and the other social studies. For this purpose less, properly pursued, is often more. Those who jump to extremes will deride a curriculum "without facts." But no such curriculum is intended. There is a basic core of factual knowledge and understanding of history and geography which all students in our society should acquire. The revised syllabi should identify this core, and provide for its inclusion in the curriculum. But at least equal attention should be given to the themes and concepts needed to give factual knowledge coherence and structure, and to experiences which will develop in students the intellectual competence that is desired. As the Report says, "The social studies should be seen not as some dreary schoolroom task of fact mastery to be tested and forgotten, but as one of the best curricular vehicles for telling the story of humanity in a way that motivates and inspires all of our children to continue the process of responsible nation-building in a world context."

Cultivate "Multiple Perspectives"

The syllabi should be so written as to help students perceive phenomena from multiple perspectives. Such perspectives should be introduced gradually, in keeping with students' developing maturity. As Drs. Gordon and Roberts write in their "Reflections" on the Report, "In modern societies the changing conception of what it means to be an educated and intelligent person includes our capacity to entertain and understand phenomena from perspectives different from our own, on our way to arriving at wise judgments and the reconciliation of differences." Life and history are complex, and it is the mark of an educated person to see things in their multifaceted complexity. We must not permit those who want only simple answers to frustrate this educational purpose. From the point of view of Europe, Columbus did indeed "discover" America -- and it was an event of profound importance not only for Europe but for the world. Yet at the same time, from the point of view of the indigenous Americans who occupied these shores before Columbus's arrival, it was Columbus who was the stranger -- their world was perfectly well known. Why do we find it so hard to entertain these two views simultaneously?

The people of a nation as diverse as ours, living in a world which seems to shrink each year, must know more about one another than we do. (Greater knowledge of one another will not guarantee comity, but it may well be a necessary precondition.) The

capacity to take multiple perspectives, to understand the other person's point of view, can help us live well with one another while also developing our intellect.

Teach Our Common Traditions

The Committee's Report understandably focuses on a perceived need in existing social studies programs -- the need to be more inclusive of the experience of all major groups which comprise American society. However, the Committee is aware that this attention to our diversity must be balanced with attention to our unity. Thus, the Report says that "special attention will need to be given to those values, characteristics, and traditions which we share in common." It asserts that "the program should be committed to the honoring and continuing examination of democratic values as an essential basis for social organization and nation-building." In their "Reflections," Co-Chairmen Gordon and Roberts write, "We recognize that nation-building, especially in so diverse a populace, requires that we give attention, not so much to our differences as to our commonalities." In his "Dissenting Opinion," Professor Schlesinger observes:

> What has held Americans together in the absence of a common ethnic origin has been the creation of a new American identity -- a distinctive American culture based on a common language and common adherence to ideals of democracy and human rights, a culture to which many nationalities and races have made emphatic contributions in the past and will (one hopes) make emphatic contributions in the future. Our democratic ideals have been imperfectly realized, but the long labor to achieve them and to move the American experiment from exclusion to participation has been a central theme of American history. It should be a central theme of the New York social studies curriculum.

These comments should be heeded. Our unity and our diversity are not opposites; they are necessary complements of each other. Both should be taught.

Understanding our national history and character necessarily entails an understanding of the political, legal, and cultural roots of our society in England, in Europe, and in the traditions of the West. The facts are that we <u>are</u> essentially an English-speaking nation. The democratic ideals and values to which we still aspire, and which are the envy of so much of the world -- the rule of law, freedom of speech, minority rights, tolerance of dissent, respect for individuals, and more -- derive from British political and legal traditions. As Professor Jackson writes, "The dominant American culture might have been German or French or Chinese or Algonquin or African, but for various historical reasons the English language and British political and legal traditions prevailed. Whether or not we would have been better off if Montcalm had defeated Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham is beside the point."

This common tradition, the tradition which unites us and makes our diversity possible, must be taught to all our children. We must be honest, and acknowledge that we have not always lived up to our ideals -- egregiously not, in some cases. And we must show how this tradition has been further shaped and enriched by Americans from all continents. But as we make our curriculum more inclusive, we should not lose sight of what we are including people in.

Include Examples of the Experience of Many Peoples

As the Report says, "The Committee agreed that to reflect a multicultural perspective, the syllabi need not attempt to provide an encyclopedic list of every contribution by every person and group. Rather, as the emphasis shifts from an information-based to a conceptual curriculum, the syllabi should offer many appropriate examples of the experiences of many peoples and groups. . . . The syllabi and other materials should provide teachers with several examples, drawn from different peoples, as appropriate to each topic." The point, again, is not to achieve encyclopedic coverage, but rather to ensure two conditions:

- That all students, whatever their race or ethnicity, find in the curriculum reason for believing that they and their ancestors have shared in the building of the country and have a stake in its success, and

- That all students, whatever their race or ethnicity, learn more about those who are different from themselves.

Tell the Whole Story

No society, no people, no culture escape the grace and the stain of human nature. Greece, for all its glory, denied citizenship to women; Rome, for all its grandeur, turned to decadence and decay. As much is true of the other great civilizations of Africa, Asia, India, and the Americas, each with its own instances of attainment and struggle. No culture corners the market on enlightment and justice; none embodies fully the qualities of ignorance and cruelty.

Social studies syllabi should be written so as to reflect these truths. Our history and the story of our many peoples must reflect not only our achievements, but our shortcomings; not only our triumphs, but our pain; and not only our failures, but our successes and ideals. This is not to say that all cultures or civilizations are "equal"; but it is to say that students are capable of understanding the complexity of human nature and the human experience, and an education which does not help them do so sells them short.

Maintain Scholarly Standards, and Include Up-to-Date Scholarship

Care should be taken to maintain high standards of scholarly accuracy, with fidelity to historical fact and proportion. At the same time, as the Report says, "The curriculum must strive to be informed by the most up-to-date scholarship. It must be open to all relevant input, to new knowledge, to fresh perspectives." Contrary to the popular view, history is being constantly rewritten -- not the facts, although new ones can be discovered, but our perceptions of the facts and the meanings we attach to them. New interpretations are not necessarily more true or useful than older interpretations; but neither are the inherited interpretations automatically the best. As they mature, students should be helped to understand that history is not a set of inert facts, but a story constantly in need of reworking and retelling.

Be Sensitive to Language and Representation

The Committee's Report recommends that "the syllabi and all related support materials and locally developed curricula should be regularly reviewed to insure that the language used is accurate and reflects current scholarship. Classroom instruction must include sensitivity to and awareness of the changing legitimacy of terms." In general, this recommendation should be followed. I shall leave it to others to be the final arbiters of these matters of linguistic sensitivity and fashion, but sensitivity itself seems worth pursuing. I do not understand the notoriety which has attached to the Committee's suggestion that the words "enslaved person" be used instead of "slave." After all, we have all grown accustomed to saying "people" rather than "mankind" and to referring to "children with handicapping conditions" rather than to "handicapped children." These verbal gestures serve a sensitizing function, if no other.

Similarly, the Report urges sensitivity to the naming of geographic regions and the drawing of conceptual boundaries among them. Here again, I leave the detail to those more competent to address it; but if concessions can be made (as I believe they can) to people's sensibilities without violating linguistic or geographic accuracy, why should we not make them? How does it profit me to insist on using the word "Oriental" if the person to whom I refer would prefer to be known as an "Asian"?

Avoid "Hypostatization"

In the "Additional Comments" he appends to the Report, Professor Glazer warns of the danger of "hypostatization." (To hypostatize: "to make into, or regard as, a separate and distinct substance; . . . to assume a reality.") He writes:

> The various ethnic groups, races, sub-cultures, the components of what we like to call with some exaggeration "the peoples of America," are not composed of a "distinct and separate substance." The groups we refer to when we speak of "multiculturism" are not monolithic and unchanging realities. Each is made up of different classes with different interests, each has been marked by differences created by the time of arrival of different waves under different circumstances, each has undergone various degrees of assimilation, acculturation, intermarriage, and each carries different attitudes to its past: European immigrants overwhelmingly see their assimilation to the United States, under the system of public education they experienced, as a good thing, even if their specific culture and language at the time played no role in the curriculum. Many of us recognize no identity other than American. When we speak of "multiculturism," we should be aware there are no fully distinct cultures in the United States, aside from American culture. We should not make of something labile, changeable, flexible and variable -- the cultures people bring with them to the United States or develop as variants of our common American culture -- something hard and definite and unchanging, something that establishes itself as a distinct and permanent element in American society and polity. That is not the way our society works, or should work.

Professor Glazer's words of caution should be heeded. We live in a time when, for many in our society, ethnic and cultural differences are of defining importance. It is for this reason that we urge that these differences be recognized and understood in the curriculum. But for many other Americans of all ethnicities, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are of secondary importance to their identity with our common American culture.

Thus the social studies syllabi should treat the issues of race, ethnicity, and culture as one way of understanding American history and American society today -- indeed, they should treat them as issues without which American history and society cannot be understood. At the same time, however, the syllabi should not regard such issues as the sole way of understanding the United States. They should include other perspectives (economic theory, the development of a "New World," the history of ideas, etc.) as well.

Reorganize the K-12 Program to Permit Observance of These Guidelines

The State's existing K-12 social studies program, as reflected in the syllabi published by the Education Department, contains many virtues but needs to be reorganized. So says the Committee's Report, and so have said many teachers and supervisors in recent years. As the Committee says:

A general examination of the K-12 program is needed in order to promote revision according to the findings and recommendations of this Committee. The State Education Department should immediately establish work groups to make revisions designed to produce a coherent and meaningful course of study. Grades 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11 should receive special attention. Recent events in Europe should be included in material now covered in grades 5 and 6, with attention to multiple perspectives. Regional studies at this level should include areas of the entire Eastern Hemisphere. The syllabus for grade 11 should provide scope for teachers to incorporate the background necessary to understand the development of U.S. history. Content coverage throughout the program should be limited and focused, providing teachers with a range of choices, each including diverse perspectives, in order to promote understanding and the development of critical thought.

Syllabi should be revised to reflect these recommendations, consistent with the other guidelines presented above.

Relate the Social Studies to Other Subjects in the Curriculum

The Committee recommends:

The elementary schools should be encouraged to teach an integrated or interrelated curriculum. At the middle and upper levels every effort should be made to relate social studies topics and concepts to teaching in the other subjects. Such an approach lends itself to the reflection of multiple cultural perspectives and awareness of the achievements of many cultures.

Good teachers have always helped students make these connections. The syllabi should be written so as to facilitate the process.

What is NOT Recommended

The guidelines recommended above for revising our Social Studies syllabi are as follows:

Establish Balanced Goals
Adopt Sound Principles
Emphasize Understanding
Cultivate "Multiple Perspectives"
Teach Our Common Traditions
Include Examples of the Experience of Many Peoples

Tell the Whole Story
Maintain Scholarly Standards, and Include Up-to-Date Scholarship
Be Sensitive to Language and Representation
Avoid "Hypostatization"
Reorganize the K-12 Program to Permit Observance of These Guidelines
Relate the Social Studies to Other Subjects in the Curriculum

These guidelines should speak for themselves. However, because the issue of "multicultural education" has been subject to so much misunderstanding and misrepresentation by the public and the press, it may be well to be explicit about what is not herein recommended. Among other matters, there are these:

- NOT recommended: trashing the traditions of the West.

  RECOMMENDED: asserting the centrality of our Western political and legal values and traditions.

- NOT recommended: an Afrocentric curriculum.

  RECOMMENDED: a balanced curriculum, one which develops understanding of both our unity as one society and our differences as sons and daughters of diverse ethnicities and cultures.

- NOT recommended: ethnic cheerleading and separatism.

  RECOMMENDED: telling students the whole truth about history, with each group seen in both its blemishes and its virtues; and promoting greater unity in our common democratic American mainstream, partly through greater understanding of our differences.

- NOT recommended: distorting history.

  RECOMMENDED: fidelity to historical fact and proportion, teaching more of the truth about more of our people to all of our children.

- NOT recommended: a curriculum of self-esteem.

  RECOMMENDED: a curriculum that promotes understanding and intellectual competence.

- NOT recommended: a study of American history based on ethnicity or culture alone.

  RECOMMENDED: attention to ethnic and cultural differences as one necessary way of understanding American history and society today -- not as the sole perspective taken.

I recommend that you take the following action:

VOTED, That the Regents authorize staff to continue to review and revise, where necessary, the social studies syllabi, consistent with the guidelines recommended above.

Provide Support for Teaching and Learning the Social Studies

Revising State syllabi is an important first step toward improving the teaching and learning of the social studies in the schools of the State. However, the syllabi alone are insufficient for the task. As the Social Studies Syllabus Committee has recommended, there is much more to be done to effect the changes needed. Phases I and II of the plan you approved in April 1990 -- "Establishing a Syllabus Review and Development Committee" and "Conducting a Needs Assessment and Planning for the Accomplishment of Desirable Changes and Additions" -- have been accomplished. Now work must proceed on Phases III-V of the plan: "Developing Syllabi and Instructional Materials," "Field Testing and Evaluation," and "Professional Development and Implementation."

As this work proceeds, attention should be paid to the useful recommendations the Social Studies Syllabus Committee has made for finishing the job. The following comments underscore the most important of these recommendations.

Teacher Education and Certification

"More than syllabi, textbooks, curriculum guides, or lesson plans, the teacher is the dominant variable in the classroom." So writes the Committee, and most people would agree. However, the Committee also notes that "the preservice education [of teachers] is uneven and the opportunities for continued professional and intellectual development on the job often meager." These conditions must be remedied.

With respect to preservice teacher preparation, the Committee writes:

> Although the full dimensions of needed reforms in teacher education are beyond the scope of this report, the Committee stresses that as a baseline, appropriate preparation for those entering social studies teaching should include a broad general liberal arts background and completion of an appropriate specialization in history or one of the social sciences. Such a combined undergraduate and graduate program should also include appropriate study of child and adolescent development, the practice of teaching, and courses leading to an understanding of teaching from a

> multicultural perspective. No single institutional model is endorsed, but colleges and universities should be urged to think afresh about ways to strengthen the academic preparation of social studies teachers.

To the extent that existing teacher preparation programs and certification requirements do not provide these experiences, the State Education Department should act to assure their provision. Further, Professor Jackson's recommendation that the State require that prospective social studies teachers study history and geography should be accepted and acted upon.

Staff Development

A great many of the teachers who will teach the social studies in our schools over the next twenty years or more are already in service. They, along with those who join the ranks, need opportunities for professional growth in understanding and teaching their subjects. As the Committee recommends,

> There needs to be significant expansion of in-service education for teachers. This expansion should include more opportunities for formal advanced graduate study in the academic areas, expanded programs of summer seminars and independent study for teachers (along the lines of the federal programs of the National Endowment for the Humanities), and workshops on specific topics related to the teacher's field, to a variety of teaching assignments, and especially to the understanding of peoples and cultures not familiar to the teacher. Of special importance to the improvement of multicultural education is the need for classroom-focused workshops and training programs. To be successful, such programs should draw deeply on the best contemporary scholarship as well as on the experience of master classroom teachers.

Such experiences should be provided, and should be extended in appropriate form to administrators, supervisors, and school support staff as well. The Education Department should collaborate with organizations of social studies teachers as well as other school-related groups in the provision of these experiences.

Instructional Materials

Good social studies programs employ good textbooks and a wealth of other instructional materials -- trade books, biographies, other literature, primary source documents, maps, charts, globes, instructional software, and the like. The Regents and the Education Department should:

- o stimulate the development and availability of such material, consistent with the goals, principles, and guidelines described above
- o encourage the use of such material by teachers, schools, and school districts
- o seek sufficient funds to make possible the purchase of such material.

Time and Other Resources

If the social studies program is to achieve its goals, adequate time must be made available to both students and teachers. At minimum, the present time requirements (or their equivalent) for the social studies should be maintained. And teachers must have time to plan as well as to teach, and to participate in the staff development experiences described above. The Regents should seek the resources needed to make this time available.

Other staff members, parents, grandparents, and members of the community can make a valuable contribution to the social studies program as well. For example, as the Committee recommended, "Cultural and arts institutions should be encouraged to address multicultural perspectives as they develop collections and plan to implement their exhibits and programs."

Assessment

Once new syllabi have been prepared (and "desired learning outcomes" have been specified, as outlined in the *New Compact for Learning*), State and local programs of student and program assessment should be revised accordingly. The Committee recommends:

> Assessment should evaluate the student's ability to analyze, synthesize, and organize information, to reason and to think critically. At various points in the K-12 program, social studies assessment should ascertain the level of achievement in content, concepts and skills as outlined by the syllabi. Assessment should include various forms such as improved multiple-choice tests, portfolios, hands-on problem-solving projects, and professional evaluation developed by the classroom teacher. All assessment should reflect multiple perspectives. Each local district should conduct a comprehensive

social studies assessment program rather than relying only on State tests. State testing programs should be revised.

These recommendations should be heeded.

Next Steps

In order to accomplish the revision of the syllabi and the other measures described above, the State Education Department should convene a Social Studies Work Group, consisting of outstanding scholars and teacher practitioners representing a range of backgrounds. (Some members of this Work Group should be drawn from the Social Studies Syllabus Committee, but others should be asked to serve as well.) The Work Group, assisted by Department staff, should make the desired revisions in the syllabi. The Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee should continue to provide advice and guidance on the overall project, subject to the discretion of the Commissioner and the Regents. Work should proceed expeditiously so that field-testing of the revised syllabi and assessments may begin in the 1992-93 school year, with full implementation to begin in 1993-94.

I recommend that you take the following action:

VOTED, That the Regents authorize staff to undertake the steps described above for providing support for teaching and learning the social studies.

WE, THE PEOPLE

As the Board engages these issues, it may be well to remember that the story of our nation is not ended. The unique American experiment -- forging a common nation from peoples drawn from every quarter of the globe -- continues to unfold. A generation or two ago, the flood-tide of immigration was from Southern and Eastern Europe. Today, many thousands of men, women, and children from Southeast Asia, from Mexico, from Central America and the Caribbean take up residence here, work at jobs, attend schools. Attitudes toward this diversity, and the ways in which we seek to make of it the asset that it can be, alter over time. Knowledge grows; perspectives change. No doubt this proposed social studies program will some day seem as old-fashioned as do many textbooks of a bygone time.

The tasks of defining who we are and deciding what to teach our young are perennial. As Professor Glazer says, the Committee's Report "continues a debate, rather than concludes it." The goal of this debate should be to enlarge the area of consensus as much as possible, within a framework of shared democratic values. Fortunately, despite some of the rhetoric which has attended public discussion of these issues, the area of consensus is already large and growing. The Committee, for example, has eschewed extreme positions; and even the dissenters, Professors Jackson and Schlesinger, agree that "we should celebrate the cultural diversity which has made the United States almost unique among the world's nations" and that "it is unquestionably necessary to diversify the syllabus in order to meet the needs of a more diversified society." I am convinced that it is possible to attain these ends while still strengthening the ties that unite us; and I am confident that the vast bulk of New Yorkers and of Americans will support this moderate, common-sense position. "We, the people" are a more diverse group than the white males who framed the preamble to the U.S. Constitution; but in these United States, "We, the people" are and will remain one.

APPENDIX A

STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF ONE ANOTHER, OUR CULTURE, AND THE WORLD

History of Regents Policy and Action

The Board of Regents has a long and active record of support for efforts to increase students' understanding of cultural diversity. While consistently emphasizing the need to maintain the common social, ethical, and political traditions of our society, the Regents have encouraged schools to have students learn more about the many peoples who comprise our nation and about the history and culture of other peoples throughout the world.

In 1970 the Regents published a policy paper on the international dimensions of education. Citing conclusions of the 1964 Commission on International Understanding of the Association of American Colleges, the paper stated that if future generations of Americans are to acquire competence for living in the world of tomorrow, their education must transcend its customary limitation to the ways of life and patterns of thought that characterize Western civilization:

> A man must come to see himself in relation to his total environment in space and time and so to locate himself on a map of human experience. This entails both the analysis of similarities and the perception of differences, both an understanding of the cultural tradition that has helped to shape him and a knowledge of the competing traditions which provide a standard of comparison.

The paper defined international education as follows:

> In the broadest sense, international education is any kind of educational experience, formal or informal, which enlarges understanding of mankind's social and cultural diversity and of the interrelations among nations and peoples. . .
>
> It is not enough merely to introduce new courses with an international orientation. Some of the research done in regard to whether attitudinal change results from teaching students about foreign cultures indicates that in many, if not most, instances, students in foreign area studies courses have their prejudices about foreign cultures reinforced. Special efforts will have to be made to develop educational programs that will compensate for the

> prejudices and stereotypes which children learn from adults and from movies, television and comic strips. It is no longer enough to inform students accurately about cultures and societies different from our own; it is necessary also to provide the kinds of educational experiences that will lead them to act in response to new information, to behave more constructively toward persons who are culturally different from themselves, those who are members of their own society as well as from other societies.

The paper called for programs to be developed on the issues of conflict resolution and international cooperation; democracy and the problem of population growth; intercultural relations; comparative urbanization; science and society; humanities and the arts; and language. (The original language of the paper included the then-common "universal" usage of "man" and the masculine pronouns. Although the language would differ today, the policy statement clearly means to refer to all students.)

In 1976 the Regents issued a policy paper entitled "Education and Global Interdependence." This paper stressed the importance of understanding the role of the United States in the world: that our country is populated by people from many lands and is widely recognized to set, or at least to influence, the major trends in culture, in commerce, and in political relations in the world. The Regents directed the Department to initiate new programs as follows:

> . . .a Regents forum under direction of the State Education Department to be known as the Regents Forum in New York State as a World Setting; the Regents funding of study centers in key regions of the world; the Regents ask the Department to work with leading schools of business administration in New York State and the national accrediting organization in this field, The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, in improving training in international business for all students preparing themselves for business careers; the furtherance of courses in American studies for students, teachers and educational officials from other countries by particular use of the resources of the New York State Library, the New York State Museum and other educational, cultural and professional organizations incorporated in The University of the State of New York; that secondary schools, boards of cooperative educational services, two- and four-year colleges and the State Education Department work together to make more widely available the international baccalaureate curriculum which prepares students for entry into major foreign universities and to the junior level of American universities; a direction to the State Education Department by the Regents to establish standards of basic knowledge about world political, social, economic and cultural issues and to incorporate questions about those issues in State examinations; and the Regents encourage institutions to facilitate student

> travel and study abroad in programs that contribute to the student's vocational educational goals; the Regents finally direct that the Department's international programs be evaluated after five years to determine the contribution which these programs have made to increasing the knowledge and understanding of New York State citizens of critical, regional and global problems.

The paper also contained a review of international activities that gave emphasis to the major themes cited in the 1970 position paper.

In 1980 the Regents reviewed a paper summarizing New York State's needs for education in international affairs, foreign languages, and multicultural understanding. The paper placed great emphasis on the need to revive and expand New York's international economic sector as a key to ensuring economic health in the future. It also called for the development of a citizenry informed about international cultural affairs and equipped with communication skills for capitalizing on the opportunities offered by a changing world.

In 1982 the Department took the Regents discussions on education for a global perspective statewide. A plan for New York State was distributed widely and hearings were held. The introduction to the plan began with this statement:

> The plan for education for a global perspective aims at two fundamental changes in New York's educational program. First the plan requires schools and educational agencies to incorporate into the instructional program the teaching of information and skills which will help students to better deal with our multicultural society both within this nation and in the wider world. Second it aims to prepare a multilingual population of persons able to communicate in English and at least one other language.

The goal of the plan was to develop among all students a "knowledge and understanding of the cultures of this nation and the world and to provide more students with communication skills necessary to meet their personal and professional objectives in cultural settings and in languages other than their own." The paper contained four objectives. The first objective was: "As a condition for receiving a high school diploma, high school students will demonstrate an understanding of the interaction among their own and other cultures in an era of change, diversity, and conflict and an understanding of the world as a network of interdependent, cultural, social, economic, political and environment systems." The second objective was: "As a condition for receiving a high school diploma, students will demonstrate a knowledge of cultures other than their own and the skills for studying other cultures, values, beliefs, and attitudes." (The remaining two objectives

dealt with language proficiency and languages other than English.) In a section entitled Implications for Regulations and Curriculum, the paper contained this passage:

> Curriculum changes are already underway in some subjects. Should the plan be adopted, the revisions will incorporate global perspectives, e.g., readings from ethnic writings in America and English translations of classics from the East; more emphasis on interdependence and on cultural learning processes in the new secondary school social studies program; references to the global implications of environmental studies in science; and the inclusion of African, Asian and Latin American materials in art and music sequences.

In 1983 the Board of Regents reviewed a progress report on education for a global perspective, summarizing the field response from the hundreds of people who responded to the 6,000 copies of the plan circulated. The chief conclusion was as follows: "There was favorable reaction to the goal and generally to the first two objectives, the ones relating to cross cultural learning and global interdependence studies, although serious questions were raised about how the student achievement is to be measured." As a result, the Regents asserted "that all students should have a knowledge and understanding of the cultures of this nation and of the world and that more students should possess communication skills necessary to meet their personal, academic and professional objectives" in both their own and other cultures and languages. They directed the Commissioner to prepare recommendations for changes that would set a goal of proficiency in a second language and would require, as a condition for receiving a high school diploma, that students demonstrate a knowledge of cultures other than their own; an understanding of the interaction among their own and other cultures in an era of change, diversity and conflict; the skills necessary to understand other cultures, values, beliefs and attitudes; and a knowledge of the world as a network of interdependent cultural, social, economic, political and environmental systems. These Regents directives were incorporated in the Regents Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results, 1984.

The Regents Action Plan included a Statement of Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary-School Students. Among the Goals were these:

Goal 3 — Each student will acquire knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, and intellectual accomplishments of civilization and develop the skills to express personal artistic talents.

Goal 3.6 — Understanding of the diversity of cultural heritages.

Goal 4 — Each student will acquire knowledge about political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in this country and other countries.

Goal 4.2 Knowledge of political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in various nations; ability to compare the operation of such institutions; and understanding of the international interdependence of political, economic, social, cultural and environmental systems.

Goal 6 Each student will develop the ability to understand and respect people of different race; sex; ability; cultural heritage; national origin; religion; and political, economic, and social background, and their values, beliefs and attitudes.

In December 1988, the Regents approved a revised policy on bilingual education, reaffirming and enlarging on their policy, adopted in 1972, that non-English-speaking students must have equal educational opportunity. The 1988 policy stated, in part:

> It shall be the policy of the Regents that:
>
> - All students in New York State become proficient in English and another language, and that students understand and respect their own and other cultures;
> - Educational access, equity and excellence be promoted for language minority and limited English proficient students.

And, in their policy statement on Youth Placed At-Risk, adopted in July 1989, the Regents approved a series of actions to be taken over the next five years to improve the education of such youth, based on policies that included the following:

> Educational programs, services and staff must respect and represent the cultural, racial, social, economic and language background of the students served.

APPENDIX B

SEVEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

The Committee believes that the social studies curriculum should be structured around the following distinct, but overlapping, principles.

1. DEMOCRACY: Bridging the gap between reality and the ideal.

Democratic ideals provide the crucial foundation of American society. The social studies curriculum should help students to assess critically the reasons for the inconsistencies between the ideals of the U.S. and social realities. It should also provide information and intellectual tools that can permit them to contribute to bringing reality closer to the ideals. To do this, the social studies curriculum should lead to an examination and understanding of the following propositions:

a. That democracy is a dynamic and ongoing process.
b. That the application of the Constitution with its Bill of Rights is the product of a concerted effort by many peoples.
c. That although liberty is an inalienable right, it is precarious and has many enemies. Therefore, freedom must be constantly fought for and protected.
d. That the real possibility of successful struggle on behalf of freedom, to vindicate rights, or to protect oneself from tyrannical abuse is democracy's source of strength.
e. That the social, legal, and political struggles of disenfranchised people (for example, those who did not own property, people of color, women) to make America live up to its ideals have historically been potent forces strengthening and helping to expand the application of the Constitution. In particular, the freedoms and rights guaranteed in the Constitution with its Bill of Rights have been realized more fully in application through the determined efforts of those who, suffering from marginalization, have battled to gain their rights.
f. That racism, which has marred U.S. society since its founding, has been a formidable obstacle standing in the way of making the democratic ideals of America a reality for all.

2. DIVERSITY: Understanding and respecting others and oneself.

The social studies curriculum should help students to make sense of a multicultural world and their place in it. This includes respect for and appreciation of the cultures of others as well as their own. Although the Committee regards racism as the fundamental schism in American society which the curriculum must address, it shares the view, adopted by the New York City Board of Education in November 1989, that multicultural education should also help students to deal with human differences based upon "linguistic diversity, gender, socioeconomic class, religion, sexual orientation, age, and the perspective and contributions of the physically challenged."

To facilitate this difficult and ongoing process of promoting empathetic sensibility and personal awareness, the curriculum should continually encourage students to ask themselves the following questions.

a. Who am I?
b. What is/ are my cultural heritage(s)?
c. Why should I be proud of it/ them?
d. Why should I develop an understanding of and respect for my own culture(s), language(s), religion, and national origin(s)?
e. Why should I develop an understanding of and respect for the cultures, the languages, the religions, and the national origins of others?
f. What is an American?
g. What holds us together as a nation?

3. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: Understanding personal and social responsibility for economic and social systems, and for their effects.

The social studies curriculum should help students to become productive citizens concerned with their own welfare and that of others. In every society, systems of economic production have consequences for people's access to useful roles, including work, and to the fruits of production. Students must be helped to understand the workings of economic systems.

Like economic arrangements, social understandings (tolerance, justice, racism, sexism) form part of the underlying structure of a society. Students should understand the importance of holding themselves and others accountable for promoting economic fairness and social justice. To bring this about, students should be provided with the tools to assess the moral consequences of their own, their neighbors', and the nation's actions. The full and equal humanity of all persons -- including people of color, women, people with disabilities --

must be continually emphasized, not only in explicit statements, but also by implication and examples.

a. First, the curriculum must motivate students to reflect on the fact that their actions have consequences and, therefore, that their rights must be balanced by their responsibilities.
b. Second, it must encourage them to ask themselves, What are my civic responsibilities? And, how well am I living up to them?
c. Third, it must inform them sufficiently so that they can also ask and respond to the following: How fairly am I treating others? How fairly am I being treated by others?
d. Fourth, it must equip them with the moral sensitivity to ask: Is my economic well-being at the expense of the well-being of others? What can I and others do to promote greater economic fairness and equity?

4. GLOBALISM: Recognizing interdependence and world citizenship.

One of the truisms of the late 20th century is that we live in a global village, where what occurs in any part of the world can affect any other. This globalism implies new opportunities and obligations. To take advantage of the former and face the challenges of the latter, the social studies curriculum must guide students in the direction of responsible world citizenship by helping them to consider the following questions.

a. How does the U.S. interrelate with other nations?
b. In what ways are our communities and others throughout the world interdependent?
c. What forms has economic development taken around the world? What have been their consequences?
d. How does the distribution of resources, technology, and labor make our economy interdependent with the economies of others?
e. What do we need to know and do to participate successfully and responsibly in a constantly changing world?
f. How have the people with whom I share a cultural heritage contributed in the past, and how do they contribute in the present, to the making of the U.S. and the world?

5. ECOLOGICAL BALANCE: Recognizing responsibility for the global neighborhood.

Accompanying world citizenship is the responsibility for the maintenance of the globe. This tall order, a critical part of the social studies curriculum, can begin to be addressed by asking students to ponder the following questions.

a. What are the most pressing ecological problems facing the earth, and what are their causes?
b. How are natural resources utilized, allocated, and consumed, within and among nations?
c. How is our ecological fate linked to that of other countries?
d. What are the ecological responsibilities of world citizenship?
e. What are my responsibilities for protecting the global environment?

6. ETHICS AND VALUES: The pursuit of fairness and search for responsibility.

Not all the problems in the world, the nation, or our neighborhoods arise from a failure of values. But many do. The social studies curriculum must help the student to distinguish between the consequences of ethical lapses or dysfunctional values, and the results of social or economic problems resulting from (for example) population shifts, technological changes, or industrial policies. Teaching students how to determine accountability for events and their effects on people is as important as teaching them to face responsibility for their own ethical choices and acts. To help students identify appropriate criteria by which to formulate judgments and assess responsibility, the curriculum must provide a base from which they can respond adequately to the questions that follow.

a. How do we demonstrate respect for ourselves and others?
b. What are our civic values? Or, what should they be?
c. How do we distinguish between individual and social responsibility?
d. How do we evaluate historical events that have contradicted or opposed the ideals of pluralism, fair play, equality and justice for all?
e. How do we make judgments about the ethics of social choices that ignore the ideals of pluralism, fair play, equality and justice for all?

7. THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY: Seeing oneself as a participant in society.

The social studies curriculum must contribute to the student's sense of belonging in the community, and of that community's belonging in the nation and the world.

a. The curriculum should help students understand themselves and others as responsible members of the following interrelated communities: family; neighborhood; town, city, or metropolitan region; state; nation; and world.

b. The curriculum should also assist students to gain a sense of cultural belonging by:

   1. Helping them recognize the fullness of their identity and heritage, both as members of specific cultural communities and as participants in a common cultural, geographic, national, and world community.
   2. Inviting them to search for the commonalities between their own cultures and those of others.
   3. Enabling them to discover the ways in which individuals and cultural communities move closer to forming a part of a common national culture, resist this process, or are discouraged or barred from engaging in it.

c. The curriculum should provide students with the resources to understand the social divisions that affect them and the overlapping loyalties that form the intricate social web linking them to others.

d. The curriculum should create opportunities for students to understand themselves as people who can bring about change in their communities, the nation, and the world.

THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, N.Y. 12234

PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY
AND COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12234

July 15, 1991

FOR INFORMATION

To: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

From: Thomas Sobol Tom Sobol

Subject: Understanding Diversity: Summary of Recommendations

The first mailing of agenda items for your meeting on July 25-26 included an item for action entitled "Understanding Diversity" (BR [A] 3). It conveys my recommendations for proceeding with this project, based upon the report presented to you in June by the Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee.

That document is of necessity rather lengthy, placing the recommendations in their needed context and laying the foundation for future staff work. For your convenience and that of the public, staff has prepared the attached summary.

SUMMARY

Recommendations for Proceeding with the Regents Plan for Strengthening Students' Understanding of Diversity

July 15, 1991

In April 1990, the Board of Regents approved a five-part plan for increasing all students' understanding of American history and culture, the history and culture of the diverse groups which comprise American society today, and the history and culture of other peoples throughout the world:

Phase I	Establishing a Syllabus Review and Development Committee
Phase II	Conducting a Needs Assessment and Planning for the Accomplishment of Desirable Changes or Additions
Phase III	Developing Syllabi and Instructional Materials
Phase IV	Field Testing and Evaluation
Phase V	Professional Development and Implementation.

Phases I and II of that plan were completed in June 1991, when the Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee submitted its report, "One Nation, Many Peoples: A Declaration of Cultural Interdependence."

The attached paper contains the Commissioner's recommendations for this project, extracting the essence of the Committee's report in a form which will enable the work to proceed within clear guidelines. A complete list of the guidelines appears at the end of this summary. They rest upon a firm and consistent philosophical framework, beginning with a recommendation that the Regents **Establish Balanced Goals** for revised social studies syllabi (page 5) -- in keeping with the Regents long-standing policy to promote the understanding of both our common democratic values and our multicultural origins, along with the development of a global perspective on our own and other societies. The syllabi should seek to develop: (1) understanding and appreciation of the democratic and moral values of our common American culture; (2) understanding and appreciation of the history and culture of the various major ethnic and cultural groups which comprise American society; (3) understanding of our society's unique strengths and its relationship to other societies in an increasingly interdependent world; and (4) students' capacity to think critically about societal issues, drawing on historical knowledge, contemporary information, and points of view from many sources. Given these purposes, our nation's unity and its diversity are not opposites -- they are necessary complements.

Another key guideline, then, is: **Teach Our Common Traditions** (page 7). The Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee said: "The program should be committed to the honoring and continuing examination of democratic values as an

essential basis for social organization and nation-building." Understanding our national history and character necessarily entails an understanding of the political, legal, and cultural roots of our society in England, in Europe, and in the traditions of the West. And we must show how this tradition has been further shaped and enriched by Americans from all continents.

To accomplish these ends, a third key guideline is: **Include Examples of the Experience of Many Peoples** (page 8). The Social Studies Syllabus Committee noted that "to reflect a multicultural perspective, the syllabi need not attempt to provide an encyclopedic list of every contribution by every person and group," but should "offer many appropriate examples of the experiences of many peoples and groups" for teachers' selection as appropriate to each topic. The point is to ensure that all students find reason for believing that they and their ancestors have shared in the building of the country and have a stake in its success, and that all learn more about those who are different from themselves.

Because the issue of "multicultural education" has been subject to much misunderstanding and misrepresentation, the paper includes the following list of what the Commissioner is, and is <u>not</u>, recommending (page 11):

<u>RECOMMENDED:</u>	<u>NOT RECOMMENDED:</u>
Asserting the centrality of our Western political and legal values and traditions	Trashing the traditions of the West
A balanced curriculum, one which develops understanding of both our unity as one society and our differences as sons and daughters of diverse ethnicities and cultures	An Afrocentric curriculum
Telling students the whole truth about history; and promoting greater unity in our common democratic American mainstream, partly through greater understanding of our differences	Distorting history
A curriculum that promotes understanding and intellectual competence	A curriculum of self-esteem
Attention to ethnic and cultural differences as one necessary way of understanding American history and society today -- not as the sole perspective taken	A study of American history based on ethnicity or culture alone

The concluding section, "We, the People," affirms that understanding both our differences and what we have in common can strengthen the ties that unite us.

The Commissioner's recommendations, in summary, are:

- that the Regents reaffirm their long-established policies concerning the study of American society and the world (page 4) -- policies embodied in documents cited in Appendix A to the paper;

- that the Regents authorize staff to continue to review and revise, where necessary, the social studies syllabi, consistent with the following guidelines (pages 4-13):

  Establish Balanced Goals
  Adopt Sound Principles
  Emphasize Understanding
  Cultivate "Multiple Perspectives"
  Teach Our Common Traditions
  Include Examples of the Experience of Many Peoples
  Tell the Whole Story
  Maintain Scholarly Standards, and Include Up-to-Date Scholarship
  Be Sensitive to Language and Representation
  Avoid "Hypostatization"
  Reorganize the K-12 Program to Permit Observance of These Guidelines
  Relate the Social Studies to Other Subjects in the Curriculum;

- that the Regents authorize staff to take steps for providing support for teaching and learning the social studies, in the areas of teacher education and certification, staff development, instructional materials, time and other resources, and assessment (pages 13-16).

The paper recommends that the Department convene an expert Social Studies Work Group to make the desired revisions in the syllabi, assisted by staff. The Social Studies Syllabus Review and Development Committee should continue to provide advice and guidance on the overall project, subject to the discretion of the Commissioner and the Regents. Work should proceed expeditiously so that field-testing of the revised syllabi and assessments could begin in the 1992-93 school year, with full implementation to begin in 1993-94 (page 16).